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Scenes in Pioneer Methodism.

✓
BY ANNIE MARIA BARNES

(*"Cousin Annie"*),


Author of *"Some Lowly Lives," "Life of David Livingstone,"* etc.

—
Carefully Edited and Illustrated.
—


"I hear the tread of pioneers,
Of nations yet to be,
The first low wash of waves where soon
Shall roll a human sea."—*Whittier.*



J. D. BARBEE, AGENT,
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*"LET THE DEEDS OF OUR METHODIST FATHERS AND
MOTHERS NEVER BE FORGOTTEN; LET YOUR CHIL-
DREN REMEMBER THEM FOREVER."*



EXPLANATORY.

IN outlining the plan for the present volume, "Scenes in Pioneer Methodism," the Sunday-school Editor wrote: "Use the word 'pioneer' only as equivalent to *beginning*, or *early* days." The author had barely entered upon her task when the wisdom of this restriction became forcibly apparent. Had an attempt been made to give *more* than this, the work would have grown to such an extent as to weary instead of please. Hence the absence from its pages of many of those stirring and pathetic scenes of later pioneer Methodism—especially in this country—and the entire passing over of numerous grand old itinerant heroes whose intrepid deeds are like rugged gems in the crown of Methodism. How could *one* volume tell even the hundredth part of these things?

The book is therefore simply what the table of its contents indicates: A record of such scenes and incidents as illustrate the history of Methodism in its introduction, or *beginning*—first in England, then in Wales, Ireland, Scotland, the West Indies, India, Africa, and in America; or what would more properly be a period extending from the organization of the first Methodist Society in England, in 1729, to about the beginning of the present century.

The utmost accuracy of detail has been aimed at, in every instance; but at the same time a legitimate draft has been drawn upon an author's natural right to "dress up" the material and to present it in as pleasing a shape as possible.

Scores of volumes touching upon the subject have been diligently searched, and the best of their contents appropriated, but the writer wishes especially to acknowledge her indebtedness to

"The Story of Methodism," by Dr. Hyde, and to the Rev. Daniel Wise's "American Methodists."

It is doubtless unnecessary to add that the object has been to awaken in the minds of the young people of our Church a noble enthusiasm for the deeds of those heroic spirits who through untold weariness and woe, toil and suffering, laid the foundations of the great spiritual house of Methodism, and through whose labor and sacrifices we, their descendants, have come into the goodly and gracious heritage that we enjoy to-day.

A. M. B.

Duluth, Ga.

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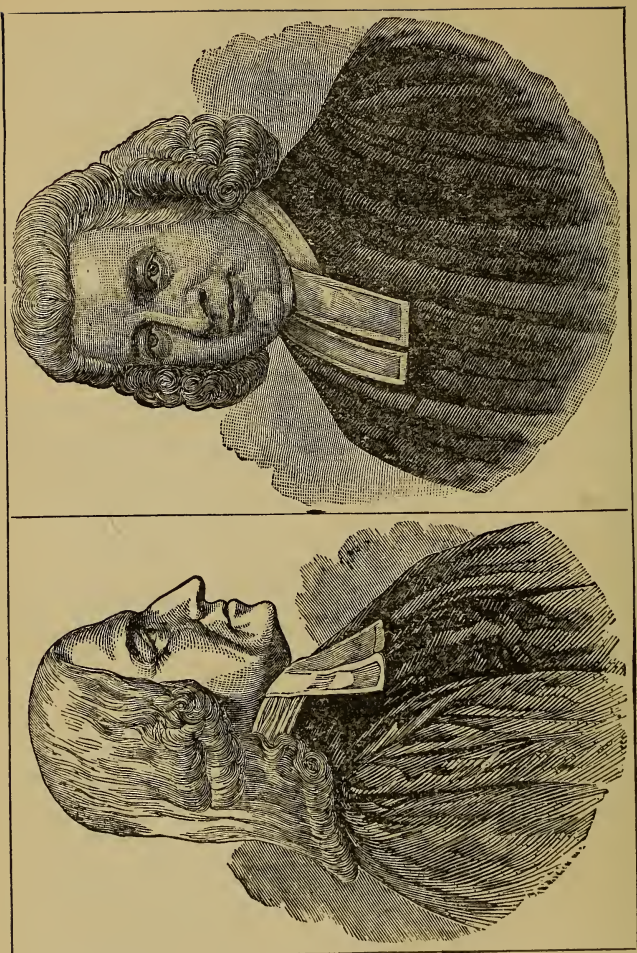
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American Methodist





JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY.

SCENES IN PIONEER METHODISM.



IN ENGLAND



THE FIRST METHODIST SOCIETY.

ON an autumn afternoon in the year 1729 two young men might have been seen walking slowly across the grounds of Oxford University, England. Their heads were bent nearly together, their shoulders inclined slightly forward, and it was apparent that they were in deep and earnest conversation. The elder of the two seemed about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age; the other was some five years younger. Neither was above medium height, but rather below it. There was, however, an erectness in the carriage of each, a graceful bearing, that made them appear much taller than they really were. The faces of both were beardless, but this did not in the least detract from their manliness. Each had clear-cut, prominent features, a skin that glowed with the rich hue of health and exercise, scrupulously kept hair that fell in rolling locks about their shoulders, and expressive blue eyes. But here the comparison ended, for while the younger was what the fastidious admirer of physical beauty would have called an ex-

ceedingly handsome youth, the elder, owing to a partly conscious and partly unconscious severity of expression and the slightly disfiguring marks of small-pox, could not lay so great a claim to manly attractiveness. But as we learn more of him, as we read of the stirring events that marked his brave and useful life, we shall come to admire him more and more.

These two young men were John and Charles Wesley, the sons of the Rev. Samuel and Mrs. Susanna Wesley, of Epworth, a village lying amidst the sunny fields of Lincolnshire. Of the remarkable family that gave such grace and charm to the plain walls of the Epworth parsonage our young people can read in any of the standard histories of Methodism.

At six years of age John Wesley had been almost miraculously saved from the burning parsonage, and had thenceforth seemed to his noble and consecrated mother as destined for some high and peculiar calling. Other events of his childhood had given promise that this hope would eventually be fulfilled. His school-life had been passed in safety and with credit. The many temptations that lure young men of a less Spartan cast assailed him in vain. Now, at the age of five and twenty, he was serving as curate to his father preparatory to finishing his course at the University—a young man mentally, if not physically, head and shoulders above his fellows, and honored and respected by all.

Charles Wesley, only five years and a half younger than his brother John, seemed twice that much, for the guilelessness of youth was still fresh upon his

face, whereas upon his brother's face it had long ago given place to the graver and sterner lines of mature manhood. Throughout his youth Charles had been noted for a sprightly and active temperament, and inclined to boyish pranks; although on this particular afternoon, when I have chosen to present him to my readers, his face bore an expression as grave and thoughtful as that of his brother.

Charles Wesley had now been three years at Oxford University, while John, after serving the same number of years as his father's curate, had returned a short time previous for his finishing term.

The subject of conversation between these two brothers, as they so thoughtfully walked across the college campus this afternoon in the late autumn of the year 1729 (November), was in full accord with the grave, almost solemn, expression of their countenances. Their talk was of a society which the younger brother had formed during the elder's absence, and which, although it numbered but three members, bade fair to strengthen and rise above the ridicule of its enemies.

In the midst of his fun-loving pursuits a spirit of deeper seriousness had taken possession of Charles Wesley. Not that he had been careless or unbelieving where his soul's good was concerned: the example of an honest father and a pious mother, the influence of a home-training unsurpassed—these were like steadying pulses beneath all lighter and frivolous tendencies. It was that for the first time Charles Wesley was beginning to feel a thrill of that con-

sciousness which the true Christian must at some time experience—the desire to worship God in spirit as well as in the outward form. He was greatly rejoiced when, on disclosing something of his feelings to a few of his more intimate companions, he found two of them ready to unite with him in any plan that promised spiritual good. These two were Robert Kirkham and William Morgan, the latter a warm-hearted, impulsive, but sincerely zealous young Irishman.

On forming themselves into a club, or “society” as it was afterward called, these young men had no definite purpose in view beyond a desire to lead a better and purer life. They began to attend regularly upon the weekly sacrament and the other services of the Church. Such a course in a college filled with wild and dissolute young men, many of whom adopted the unbelieving and skeptical tendencies of the day, could not be long pursued without calling down upon the heads of those engaged in it a storm of ridicule. That they fearlessly withstood it showed the mettle of which they were made. Thinking to mortify and irritate them, their tormentors dubbed them “Methodists,” not only because of the strict methods of their daily course, but also because the term had, through certain connections, become odious. Ah, if they could have known the power which that name was to represent!

John Wesley returned from his father’s parish to the University at Oxford in just the mood for Charles’s communication in regard to the new society to fall upon his troubled and thirsty soul as the long-bar-

ren brook, now rain-filled, tinkles over its pebbly bed. Although he had been ordained both a deacon and a priest in the Church, and although for three years he had been performing his religious and churchly duties with the rigid exactness of a man of his temperament, he had missed the very key-stone of duty itself: he was not a Christian. It was all head and no heart in what he did. It was like the stately flower bending to and fro in the breeze and keeping its own perfume within its bosom, hidden from itself and those who approached it. The flower did its duty by the physical world for which it bloomed and by the breeze that it obeyed, but who of God's human family grew the better or the happier through the rich perfume it should have yielded them?

But as the Voice which sooner or later speaks to us all, whether we heed it or not, had aroused the slumbering conscience of Charles Wesley, so had it also alarmed the soul of John. He was conscious of a vague unrest, of a mere perfunctory interest in all that he did. So far this awakening had shown him naught beyond a feeble desire to change his present course. There was nothing satisfactory; all was doubt and perplexity. At first he determined to retire from the world and lead a life of seclusion and self-denial, hoping to please God the more by thus crucifying the flesh. But this was not God's plan for John Wesley. He was not to stand idle, morbid, and alone, but to serve bravely and cheerfully among thousands. A "serious man," whom he went many

miles to see, said to him: "The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion; you cannot go to heaven alone; you must therefore find companions or make them."

A word fitly spoken. John Wesley was ready to receive it, and he felt as if a hand had touched every chord within his breast and set them all quivering. "Religion was companionship—brotherhood—love!" How prophetic of the great religious body which his fearlessness and faith afterward founded!

Considering the state of his mind, then, on this autumn afternoon in 1729, we cannot wonder that he listened with the deepest interest to his brother's account of the society so newly formed and so bravely determined to carry out the spirit of its organization. It needed no urging on the part of Charles to induce his older and graver brother to become a member. Here was that very companionship, brotherly help, and love which the "serious man" had counseled.

Week by week the little band of devoted "Methodists" slowly increased, despite the ridicule of the thoughtless and the opposition of the maliciously inclined. From that November day in 1729 they began regular attendance upon all Church services, to hold private meetings among themselves—such as morning and evening prayer, the study of sacred subjects, reading of the Scriptures, etc.

In 1730 the warm-hearted and zealous Morgan, overflowing with that love toward his less fortunate fellow-men which characterized his after life, began to lead the little band out on missions of love and mercy to the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, and to

those in prison. Thus at the beginning of a religious revolution, the mighty power of which has been felt in every habitable quarter of the globe, did its founders strike the very key-note of that governing principle of the spiritual life of the great body of Christians known as "Methodists"—the principle of fellowship, brotherhood, and love.

The times in which the star of Methodism rose as a clear and beautiful light were sadly in need of such a light. The spirit of sectarian bigotry and strife, of worldliness and profanity, was abroad in the land. In his "Story of Methodism" Dr. Hyde says: "The history of religion in England, since Augustine with his company entered Canterbury twelve hundred years before, shouting, 'Lord, save this guilty city!' had been like the history of English politics—a tale of strife. Especially had the last two centuries, since Henry VIII. had broken from Rome, been a period of constant struggle. Protestant and Romanist, Prelatist and Independent, had fiercely fought for existence or for mastery. The fair fields of England had been stained with English blood by English hands; the fresh air had been tainted with the smell of human sacrifices in fires of English kindling."

That this war of passions was fatal to the steady and healthful growth of a pure religion we may well believe. Not that there were wanting many examples of genuine personal piety, since those were the days that gave us such divines as Baxter, Barrow, Owen, and Howe; but that even the honest and manly efforts of these sincere and sturdy spirits offered but

weak resistance to the rushing tide of infidelity and wrangling skepticism flooding court and people. Even from the Churches, from those that professed to be steadfastly grounded in the one living faith, no help seemed to come; for the Churches themselves had been invaded and tainted by the corrupting influences then settling down like a blight over all the land. What was worse, they were in a strange state of decay, worn out with bitter controversy, and smitten with the baneful blight of infidelity.

Never in the days of Martin Luther had there been such actual and general darkness, such wide-spread barbarism. And as the Protestant Reformation is said to have been begun with the earnest efforts of the fearless monk who shook the world, so may we in all honesty assert that with the rising of the morning-star of Methodism was inaugurated the day-dawn of that pure Christian religion which throughout all sects owning Christ as their Head has given to the world its noblest and grandest impetus.

At the very time that the chill and gloom of skepticism were settling down as a murky pall over England, when Voltaire and his school had succeeded in their unholy design of poisoning the whole social and religious atmosphere of France, and Frederick of Prussia with the Rationalists had made "a desolate waste of the faith in the very home of Luther," God was maturing his plans through a mere handful of brave young spirits, called in derision "Methodists." Thus the night had deepened, but the dawn was at hand. Truly we might in vain search the

world over for a more eloquent illustration of how man's extremity was God's opportunity.

As the months went on into the years the little society, formed for purely religious purposes, steadily increased in membership. When John Wesley returned from a mission to Georgia—of which we shall speak presently—he placed himself more conspicuously at the head of the society, and found that it had a score of members. Many of these have made Methodist history what it is. Of the widening influence of this first society of Methodism we can speak no further in this chapter.



THE FIRST EVANGELIST OF METHODISM.

WHILE Charles Wesley, in the earnestness of his newly awakened soul, was leading his band of young "Methodists" to the weekly communions of the Church, there was serving as waiter at an inn in the quaint old city of Gloucester a rough, uncouth lad of fifteen who was destined to contribute more than one stirring chapter to the records of Methodism. This was George Whitefield, whose boy-life gave as little promise of his noble manhood as the darkness of midnight gives of the coming day. Through all his childhood he had been wayward and headstrong, restive of restraint, and had many vicious tendencies. He would take things that were not his own, and more than once had even robbed his mother's till. He seemed to hate instruction and to shun every noble influence. In short, as he expressed it himself

in after life, it appeared as if he were determined to develop a "fitness to be damned." Yet, in the midst of all these willful inclinations, there were times when the "still small voice" spoke to him in tones he could not silence. At this very time, when in a blue apron and cap he was "washing mops and cleaning rooms" at the hotel, that incomparable book, Kempis's "Imitation of Christ," fell into his hands. It touched his heart as nothing else had ever done. He had always cherished a strong passion for the theater, and had intended to go upon the stage as soon as he could perfect the arrangements. It made no difference to him that his mother's tears flowed freely and that her prayers were many and fervent whenever this subject was mentioned to her. His indifference then was only a stronger proof of the real callousness of his nature. Whitefield had early developed a rare gift of eloquence. When a mere stripling he often astonished his hearers by bursts of oratory that would have been remarkable in one of double his age.

As we have seen, the perusal of Kempis's "Imitation of Christ" set Whitefield to thinking; and that was doubtless the first serious thinking he had ever done in his life. At any rate, it gave him an impetus in a more commendable direction than any for which he had yet shown a tendency. He began to have a thirst for knowledge, a desire to comprehend the many grand truths set forth in the "Imitation."

About this time a poor student of Pembroke College, Oxford University, chanced to visit George

Whitefield's mother. He was what was known as a "servitor"—that is, one who supported himself through college by doing services for the richer and more fortunate students. Mrs. Whitefield had always been ambitious for the advancement of her son, with a mother's ready intuition recognizing his unusual gifts. That she had not given him more advantages, even supposing that he would have accepted them, was owing to the pathetic fact that she was not only a widow but a very poor one. The coming of the Pembroke student, however, opened a most alluring vista in the mother's bright dreams. During a conversation relative to his college life, the young man chanced to remark that he had earned enough during the past quarter to pay his college expenses and leave him a penny besides. At this announcement the widow turned to her son and cried with animation, "Will you not go to Oxford University and do as this young man has done?" He at once and cheerfully consented, showing the influence which the "Imitation of Christ" had had upon him.

A few influential friends were now found willing to help the young man secure an entrance into the college, provided he would give genuine evidence of turning from his old vicious life and of determining to apply himself to study so as to be prepared for admittance. The next three years of Whitefield's life are thus summed up: "He laid aside his blue apron, gave himself up to study, shook off every old idle habit, became very attentive to religious duties, and, aided by a friend's gift to pay his matriculation fee,

entered college at Oxford when he was eighteen years of age."

Before entering college Whitefield, in common with many others, had heard of the band of "Methodists" recently organized there. "I loved them," declared Whitefield, "from the time I heard of them." Every principle set forth in this open and fearless start toward a purer and better life seemed to accord with his ideas of genuine religion and of true brotherly affection. Yet, despite this sympathetic feeling, Whitefield for some reason kept himself aloof from the society during the first months of his college course. It was doubtless owing to an extreme timidity, a reluctance to presume beyond his place. Most of the Oxford students of that day were of the richer class, many of them the sons of noblemen. These young men were as haughty and overbearing as they were wealthy, and there is little doubt that the poor servitors were shown their position and given forcible hint to keep it. It may be that Whitefield expected to find some of this spirit in the Wesleys and the other young men who with them formed the "Holy Club," though the name itself signified that they were above all such low and petty feelings. He kept a respectful distance, but with swelling heart regarded the little company as it passed through sneering crowds to the Church services. He longed to be one of them, but dared not make the first advances. He now more fully comprehended the nature of their work and appreciated the courage that rendered them unconscious of their tormentors.

Strong whisperings of the Voice that had awakened Charles Wesley from his old merry, thoughtless life, and aroused John from his apathy, now began to be heard deep within the soul of George Whitefield. Conscience smote him as with a many-lashed whip. More plainly than ever he saw the wickedness of his past life. It seemed to him that despite the penitence of the present the Almighty must consume him with wrath for the sins of the past. Tormented, blinded, misled, he hoped to do penance by a rigid crucifixion of the body, an humbling of the spirit to the dust. So had John Wesley sought to atone, to purify himself for nobler work, and found his mistake. Would Whitefield find his also? Strange that to the storm-torn soul of neither came at that time a soothing whisper of the gentle yet all-powerful Saviour, so willing to forgive the truly penitent, so ready to save.

Whitefield began to put various crosses upon himself, with the wild hope that he would in this way commend himself to the graciousness of Heaven. How little he knew of true religion! He wore unseemly woolen gloves many sizes too large for him, a patched gown made all out of date, and dirty, slipshod shoes. He let his hair go uncared for, his face unwashed; he ate coarse brown-bread and drank "sage-tea without any sugar." Whole days were passed by him in lying prostrate upon the cold ground in earnest supplication to Heaven that his sins might be forgiven according as he made amends for them. In fact, as one of his biographers declares, he came

near permanently ruining his health by these "vain ways of trying to save his soul."

For three years he struggled on in this distressed frame of mind, becoming the butt of every ungenerous student in the college, when a happy incident brought him to the notice of Charles Wesley. A mutual regard sprung up, and in a short while he was a member of the club known as "The Methodists." Though he began to moderate somewhat the severe penances he had imposed upon himself, he still kept up many that were exceedingly humiliating. Even though he had identified himself with those endeavoring to live nearer to God, the enlightenment had not yet come to him that the pardon of sin is not to be purchased through any penance put upon the body.

Strange as it may seem, Whitefield's condition at this time was but the condition of others of the little club. Not until they came to realize and acknowledge their utter dependence upon the atoning blood of Christ did their true religious life begin. The knowledge came to Whitefield through the reading of a book that Charles Wesley lent him, "The Life of God in the Soul of Man." His feelings when the glad light broke upon him are best described in his own words: "O with what joy unspeakable, even joy that was full and big with glory, was my soul filled when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God broke in upon my disconsolate soul!"

The days preceding this awakening had been the

darkest and most bitter in all Whitefield's checkered career. Such were the torments of his mind that he entirely neglected his person. He became so shabby and sloven that his employers finally dismissed him in disgust; and whenever he appeared among the students he was hooted at and covered with dirt. He lay "whole days and weeks prostrate upon the ground, with sweat dripping from his face or trembling with cold." His health gave way, and a sickness which from the first seemed mortal came upon him. Speaking of it afterward, he said: "For it I shall bless God through the ages of eternity." And no wonder, since it was in the seventh week of this sickness that the light suddenly burst upon him—the knowledge that Jesus the Saviour had died for him, a sinner, and through the atoning blood his sins which were as scarlet could be washed to the whiteness of snow.

Recovering from this sickness at length, Whitefield began preparations for that marvelous career that has added so great a luster to the crown of early Methodism. He would become an humble expounder of the gospel of Christ Jesus, the bearer of light to those who still sat in darkness. Almost the entire night previous to his ordination he spent upon his knees in prayer, watching like some true knight of old "with his armor on," as an earnest of his devotion to the cause which he had espoused.

Ordained as a minister of Christ, Whitefield at once entered upon the course he had chosen—that of an evangelist, "chief of all since the gospel came."

No particular Church should be his, no specified pulpit. He would preach to all; to all alike who came should the glad tidings of Christ's death and resurrection be proclaimed. To the winning sweetness, the matchless persuasiveness, the marvelous oratory of Whitefield's preaching "all of his day bear witness." Nothing like it had been heard before; very little like it since. Hardened skeptic and weeping penitent were alike swayed by its electrical power. Thousands fell prostrate before its sweeping eloquence as the leaves of the forest bestrew the track of a rushing gale. David Hume, one of the stoniest unbelievers of his day—the man whose heart was said to be seldom, if ever, genuinely touched—was heard more than once to declare that he would go twenty miles to hear Whitefield preach, whereas to other preachers he had neither the patience nor the politeness to listen. Dr. Franklin, after making up his mind beforehand not to give one penny to a cause which he heard that Whitefield was going to present on a certain occasion, ended by emptying his pockets to the last penny, twenty pounds in all, and with an unusual flush upon his face bore witness with manly straightforwardness that in another moment under such a storm of oratory he would have been compelled to offer his whole estate.

If such was the effect upon those with strong heads and rock-incased hearts, what must it have been upon the humble and more impressionable class? It is with no surprise, then, we read that immediately after the preaching of one of Whitefield's most

powerful sermons the bishop was informed that fifteen persons had gone "stark, raving mad." The reply of the bishop showed that he was in full sympathy with the wonderful preacher: "Well, then," said he, "I should like for the madness to abide until the next Sabbath."

The appearance of the matchless orator was in pleasing accord with the silver utterances of his tongue, the unsurpassed bursts of eloquence that came rushing from his blazing heart. Tall and fair, his face was one to win all beholders by the gracious sweetness of its expression. Ingenuousness and ardor, sincerity and devotion, had left their glowing stamp upon every manly feature. His form was symmetry itself, his gestures and grace of bearing declared by those who had seen both the famous actor and statesman to surpass those of Garrick and Chat-ham. As to the common people, they heard him in "wild, uncritical delight." He had what the most exacting of critics pronounced "the finest voice of the century." Its rich yet delicate tones were often audible to every ear in a congregation of thousands, while its power rose above the "noise of the elements and the tumult of the people." Yet, the real power was not in the voice nor in the man, but in the God who spoke through him. This Whitefield often acknowledged with that rare humility that was as much a part of him as his ardor and his eloquence. As he gave it forth to the people, the gospel seemed to them "as something newly revealed." They were startled, then amazed, then struck with the lightning-bolt of

conviction. Under his preaching there began such a "searching of hearts" as had never been known before. O the delight he took in being only an humble evangelist to the people!

A summons now came to Whitefield from John Wesley, who was in the new colony of Georgia. His heart leaped to meet it as a soldier's leaps at the bugle-call "to arms." Setting out for Bristol, there to make final preparations for his departure, he preached unweariedly all along the route, in such houses as he could secure, but oftener by the wayside and in the open fields. So had the great Master and his disciples preached before him. Reaching Bristol, one of his mighty trumpet-blasts startled, aroused, alarmed the whole city. Whenever he preached the people came in crowds that swelled into thousands. He soon had to leave the churches and go into the open air, for not half the people could be accommodated in the buildings. Everywhere the word seemed "sharper than a two-edged sword," while the "doctrine of the new birth made its way like lightning in the hearers' consciences."

Going away for a short time on a farewell visit to some relatives in a neighboring city, he was on his return greeted by larger and more demonstrative crowds than ever, many persons pressing through the throngs to grasp his hand or to welcome and bless him as he passed by. He preached now regularly five times each week. Of this preaching we have the following graphic and thrilling picture:

“Men climbed to the church-roof, clung to the rails of the organ-loft, while the breath of the crowd within condensed into drippings on the pillars.”

When he came to preach his farewell sermon the loud sobs and piteous weeping of those he was leaving for a time drowned even the bugle-notes of his silvery eloquence; and for long hours, even until considerably past midnight, he remained at his post unwearied, speaking words of comfort and of cheer. The next morning at dawn, without allowing himself more than an hour or so of rest, he started for London. The scenes enacted here were even more thrilling: “At London all the city was stirred. If he assisted at the Lord’s Supper, the elements had to be resupplied. If he spoke for a charity, the collections were trebled. The police were employed to manage the crowds. Before the morning light throngs of people, as at the American theatrical representations, filled the streets, making their way by lanterns to secure places for hearing his ten-o’clock sermon.”

After such an “immense stir” as this, it is no wonder that we find it recorded that there were many who experienced a feeling of deep relief when they heard that he had departed for Georgia. Skeptics they were, doubtless, and frivolous devotees at the shrines of Folly and Fashion, whom his loud bugle-blasts had startled even in their places of fancied security and professed indifference. Ah, if they could have known how he was to return after awhile to shake that wicked old city to its very foundations!

THE CONVERSION OF THE WESLEYS.

ON a sunny day in the middle of October, 1735 (the 14th), a quaint, old-fashioned brig left its moorings at the Gravesend wharf, England, and set sail toward the mouth of the Thames River. This was the good brig "Symmonds," bearing a company of emigrants to the newly founded colony of Georgia in America. She carried other passengers besides, among them our old acquaintances John and Charles Wesley. The two brothers were going out in response to an urgent call from General Oglethorpe for missionaries to preach among the Indians.

After beating about for weeks in the channel and out upon the Atlantic, driven by storms or drifting aimlessly amidst "dead calms," the vessel at last, some time in December, got fairly started on her way.

The emigrants going out to Georgia consisted chiefly of a company of Moravians, with their bishop. They had been driven from their home through fierce religious persecution; and seeking the protection of their countryman, the Count Zinzendorf, of Herrnhut, himself exiled on account of his faith, they were graciously received and given passage to the then newly settled colony of Georgia, where free lands were offered them.

The two Wesleys were at once struck with the appearance and behavior of these people. John, especially, spent hours with them, deeply impressed by their simple religious faith and making a study of their language so that he might converse with them.

The tribute paid them was that they were "a good, devout, peaceable, and heavenly-minded people." When they worshiped in public, as they did regularly twice each day, by "harmoniously singing the praises of the great Creator," Wesley was one of their most attentive listeners.

On Sunday, January 25, 1736, a terrible storm struck the vessel. "The sea" says Mr. Wesley, "sparkled and smoked as if it had been on fire. The air darted forth lightning, and the wind blew so fiercely that you could scarcely look it in the face and draw your breath. The waves did not swell so high as at other times, being pressed down by the impetuosity of the blast; neither did the ship roll much, but it quivered, jarred, and shook. About half-past seven a great sea broke in upon us, which split the mainsail, carried away the companion-ladder, filled between-decks, and rushed into the great cabin." This naturally threw the passengers into a state of wild alarm. Many of them cried outright, and others rushed frantically about or threw themselves prostrate upon the deck. Even the calm, methodical Wesley confessed to a feeling of some trepidation. But amidst all this terror and confusion the Moravians were undisturbed; and drawing nearer together, they sung their sweet psalms of praise. When the angry sea broke over the ship and the mainsail was split in pieces, they sung on undismayed. The approach of death had no terrors for them. Many on board were impressed by this calm and fearless behavior, the highest type of true

courage. Mr. Wesley inquired of one of the Moravians afterward: "Were you not at all afraid during the raging of the storm?" "I thank God, no," was the ready answer. "But were not your women and children afraid?" "No, our women and children were not afraid; they do not fear to die."

Here was the most sublime exhibition of faith that Wesley had yet witnessed. In the face of death these people could stand fearlessly singing their songs. When questioned about it their answer came ready and free: "We are not afraid to die. We see naught in death to terrify us." What *was* this faith that could so uphold them in the very embrace of the grim Destroyer? The question had entered Wesley's mind, and day and night clamored for an answer. Other thoughts, too, gave him unrest. "Was it not possible that a man might possess what he thought true religion, and which might after all prove only formal and defective, lulling into temporary sleep that feeling which it could never eradicate—the fear of death?" He had thought that he was religious, that he was serving God to the best of his knowledge and ability, and yet here at the first uprising of "nature's dread elements" he had felt the chilly and uneasy sensation of dread stir at the very roots of his soul. What had he missed, that he was thus dismayed in the probable presence of death?

The "Symmonds," after a tedious and eventful voyage, cast anchor in the Savannah River, February 5, 1736.

Among the first acquaintances Wesley made on his

arrival in the new country was a well-known Moravian elder, Spangenberg by name. On going to him for advice in regard to some proposed plans, he was considerably startled by Spangenberg somewhat abruptly remarking: "My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" For a moment Wesley was at a loss how to answer. The questions were new to him; they filled him with sudden and deep surprise and unusual concern. Spangenberg continued: "Do you know Jesus Christ?" Here at least was a question he could readily answer, and so without further hesitation he replied: "Yes, I know that he is the Saviour of the world." "True," returned Spangenberg, "but do you know that he has saved *you*?" Again Wesley was deeply perplexed, but he bravely made answer: "I *hope* that he has died to save me." Spangenberg added: "Do you know yourself?" "I do," responded Wesley after some little indecision, and with considerable misgiving, as he himself afterward confessed. The truth is he did *not* know himself, but the searching questions of the Moravian elder had fallen upon fertile soil. Henceforth he was filled with the heroic resolve to struggle on until he did comprehend fully and clearly just what he was and where he stood. He now started on his ministerial career in the New World with unswerving zeal. The most rigid self-denial was practiced, the severest penalties were imposed upon the body—in all of which he was joined

by his brother Charles. They "slept on the ground, lived on bread and water, and went barefoot;" but despite this harsh mortifying of the flesh, this rigid following out of a mistaken course, they fell far short of the end for which they endured it all—the winning of souls. Ah, they had yet to learn that the pure and simple religion of Christ was something totally different from their crude ideals. At length, after a year of such mistaken crosses, which they bore with sublime energy and patience "amidst slander and persecution," Charles returned to England, his brother soon following.

During John Wesley's voyage home he constantly brooded over his failure in the new country. Among the thoughts that crowded upon him was this: Perhaps, after all, he needed redemption fully as much as the savages to whom he had gone on so momentous a mission. This thought re-opened his eyes to his own spiritual needs. Was he not also a sinner? Did he know any thing of the witness of the Spirit in the heart, about which Spangenberg had questioned him—the witness that he was an accepted child of God? What had been his works heretofore but the mere outward form? What soul, what heart had been in them? To what had amounted his views of "councils and decrees," of Church government, his rigid crucifying of the flesh, his strict adherence to certain forms and ceremonies? What peace, what comfort, what joy had they brought him? Ah, he had yet to learn that without faith—the key that unlocks the innermost door of the Christian sanctuary

—all works are vain. “I went to America to convert the Indians,” he cried from the depths of his stricken soul, “but O who shall convert me? who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief?”

Hard by the English coast the ship bringing John Wesley home passed the one that bore George Whitefield to Georgia. How different the mental state of each at that moment! The one broken in spirit and cast down with despair; the other joyous in temper, buoyant with hope, and filled with the knowledge that God was ever near.

Deplorable as was his condition, Wesley felt that there were others around him in the same perplexed and darkened state—men like himself, earnest, serious, and faithfully doing all that they could “to serve the Church.” What *was* it that was lacking? Still the same tormenting cry! In rigid self-examination he went over every point in the case. As if they had been those of another, he recounted “his attainments, his devotions, his charities, his labors, his resignation to the divine will.” Then came the searching question, “Do all these things make a man acceptable with God?” Out of all the mystery and perplexity came at last a voice whose trumpet-notes pierced his inmost soul: “No, no; only when ennobled by *faith* are these things acceptable in the sight of God!” But *what* was this faith? With the suddenness of a lightning-flash it came to him: “It was the faith in Christ—that faith which gave the sure trust that through the merits of Him who died

on Calvary his sins were all forgiven." What a simple thing it was, and yet how widely had he missed it!

At this stage of his great mental distress Wesley thought again of his old friends the Moravians. There were in London three or four congregations of these sincerely pious people, to one of which a pastor, Peter Bohler by name, had recently been sent out from Germany, chiefly through the efforts of the good Count Zinzendorf. Within a week after Wesley's return from Georgia he met Bohler for the first time—on February 7, 1738; "a day," as he declares, "much to be remembered." And no wonder! for "by Bohler, in the hand of the great God," testifies Mr. Wesley, "I was convinced of unbelief." As he had been so forcibly struck with the strong yet simple fervor of the little company of Moravians on shipboard, he was now "amazed at Bohler's accounts of the holiness and happiness that attended living faith." Under Bohler's guidance he read the New Testament as he had never read it before, and felt his "filling heart" heave and flow.

But as earnest and untiring as John Wesley was in his efforts and longings to gain this greatest blessing of all, Charles attained it before him. Having been the first of the brothers to win the name of Methodist, he was also the first to enter into the fullness of that simple faith which has been the cornerstone of Methodist doctrine from that day to this. For some time Charles also had been wrestling with the doubts and perplexities that filled his heart. One

evening while in London he visited a Moravian meeting. He heard the sweet singing, and for a time thought himself "in a choir of angels." Falling ill soon after this, he was tenderly watched over by a poor mechanic named Bray. Bray was a rough, unlettered man, "who," as Charles Wesley himself expressed it, "knew nothing but Christ, and knowing him knew all things." As ignorant and "unlearned in books" as he was, there was yet one thing this humble mechanic could teach the accomplished collegian, and that was "the way of the Lord made perfect through faith." The good Peter Bohler came many times to see the sick young man, and prayed and talked with him. Others of the Moravian society were constantly at his bedside. One of the female members of Bray's family much encouraged him by reciting a thrilling story of her experiences and final redemption through simple faith in Christ.

One evening, after having been engaged in "sweet song" with his brother John, Peter Bohler, and the others, and just as he was sinking into sleep filled with thoughts of the divine love, Charles heard a voice exclaim, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thine infirmities!" The words went to his heart with the force of an electric shock. All tendency to sleep was banished from his eyes. Raising himself up in the bed, he gazed about him—the one thought surging within him, "O that Christ *would* speak so to me!" On expressing his wonder as to whence had come the voice, the good woman said to him: "It was I, a weak, sim-

ple creature, that spoke; but the words were Christ's. He commanded me to say them, and so constrained me that I could not forbear." He now sent for his devoted friend Bray, and after several hours spent in earnest conversation and in the wrestlings of prayer, the light broke upon his darkened soul with the radiance of the noonday sun. He at last saw himself a sinner saved through the redeeming blood of Christ.

Poor John still stumbled on amidst the darkness, but for him too the light was at hand. So is it for all who strive by faith to bring it nigh. At five o'clock on the third morning after Charles's conversion John Wesley opened his Testament upon these words: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." Turning the leaves of his Testament again, the next words to reach his eyes were: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." That same afternoon he attended St. Paul's Cathedral. Deep within his heart fell the words of the anthem:

Out of the depths I have called unto thee, O Lord.
Lord, hear my voice.

In the evening of the same eventful day he attended a society meeting in Aldersgate street, and heard a layman read Luther's description of the change the Spirit works in the heart through faith in Christ. "I felt my heart strangely warmed," says Mr. Wesley. "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me

from 'the law of sin and death.' After my return home, I was much buffeted with temptations, but cried out and they fled away. They returned again and again; I as often lifted up my eyes, and he sent me help from his holy place. Now I was always conqueror."

Thus were the originator and the grand central figure of the greatest religious movement since the days of Martin Luther brought to a knowledge of saving faith as it is in Christ Jesus, chiefly through the instrumentality of the humble people known as Moravians.

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HOW ITINERANCY BEGAN.

No sooner had the witness entered the hearts of the Wesleys than they longed to make it manifest unto others. There was to them but one assured and satisfactory way, and that was by proclaiming the glad tidings abroad—the tidings of a full and free salvation through simple faith. They were well aware of the opposition with which this new doctrine would meet, not only from the outside people but from those in the Churches. What a sad reflection was this upon the professing Christians of that day! And yet it is in no wise too harsh or exaggerated. The truth is, there were very few real Christians at that time; even the clergy had grown careless and half-hearted. Many were so swallowed up in the sea of sectarian strife angrily raging at that time, so completely blinded by their bigotry, as to be utterly incapable of catching even a ray of the one pure and

beautiful light, the light that shone steadfast and clear from the throne of the Most High. And a still sadder picture can be drawn of those who did not hesitate to attend horse-races, play cards, or drink wine, while they wore the sacred vestments of the Church! As to the members, there were those who *called* themselves disciples of Christ, yet within their hearts could be found very little of that divine principle which sheds its radiant beauty over the whole Christian life—the love of one's fellow-men, that charity for them that covers a multitude of sins. Then there was another class of Christians—like some that we may see at this day, when so many pious men and women have made the records of the Churches glorious with the shining examples of their zeal: these were the ease-loving, self-indulgent, drowsy members of the Churches, who were satisfied with themselves as they were, and did not want to have the trouble of making any extra effort toward the salvation of their souls. It is no wonder that, taken up as they were with their vain, deceitful ways, their life of ease and pleasure, often of gluttony and vice, both clergy and people should have opposed a stubborn and angry front to the new doctrine which the two brothers were ready to proclaim abroad.

Soon after his conversion John went on a visit to the good Count Zinzendorf, at his home in Germany—a sort of pilgrimage of gratitude for the precious results brought about by the Moravians. While he was absent Charles began telling in public the glad story of his coming to Christ. At the close of these

talks he would exhort those who had not found this gracious Saviour to make haste in their search for him. He had a sweet, persuasive way that proved irresistible to many; and being a rare singer, the melody of his voice stirred the most callous with a power indescribable.

Great crowds began to attend these meetings. Soon the private houses where they were held would not contain the multitudes. Charles tried to secure a church or some public hall for his gatherings, but rarely succeeded. Now and then, however, a church was obtained for a night or so, through the zeal of some clergyman who, like himself before the great change had come, was earnestly seeking the light; but it always ended in the church being taken away through the opposition or dissatisfaction of the people. When required to state what they found so objectionable in Mr. Wesley's talks, they could answer nothing, save that they were "too earnest, too forcible," and made them feel "too uncomfortable." They were not the first, nor the last, lukewarm Christians to be made to feel uncomfortable under the sledgehammer strokes of early Methodism.

On John's return from Germany he joined his brother in these talks and the giving of experiences. As often as they secured a pulpit in London, Bristol, or any other city, on coming down from it they were met with the announcement: "You cannot preach in this pulpit again." "And why not, sir?" they would ask of the curate making it. "Because you *will* preach the intolerable doctrine of salvation by faith.

Besides, when you preach here such crowds come to church that our regular hearers can't get their seats, and they don't like so much heat and such crowding." Nor was persecution lacking, even thus early in the work. Charles Wesley, through a warm personal friend, who was then serving as vicar of the parish of Islington, a suburb of London, was chosen curate of the same charge. He entered upon his new duties with much energy and ardor; but, alas! no sooner had he come upon the scene than he was most shamefully treated even by the wardens of the church. They jeered him and mocked him, even when in the pulpit; they told him publicly that both he and his brother were "full of the devil," and finally he was by force prevented from entering the pulpit. The young preacher, undaunted in spirit and determined not to give way as long as the ecclesiastical head of the Church upheld him, at last appealed to the bishop; but that haughty dignitary turned his back coldly upon him, and declared that the church wardens had done "exactly right."

Nor was John free from the like persecutions. Similar experiences were his in and around London. At length, meeting his brother for conference, they decided that since "all the pulpits of London were barred against them," they would proclaim the tidings as had their Master of old, with the highways as their "pulpit places," and the heavens as their "sounding-board." And now began the struggle that has given to the story of Methodism one of its most soul-enkindling chapters—a struggle in which

these dauntless men planted its standard where the world must evermore recognize and honor it. Denied the pulpits of the churches, and urged by Whitefield, who had returned from Georgia, they determined to do their preaching in the fields, as Whitefield had already begun to do.

In this same year, 1739, the first itinerancy of Methodism began in earnest. On the commons, by the way-side, in public squares, wherever and whenever they could get a hearing, these three consecrated men proclaimed the "good tidings of great joy." Early and late they were upon the road, sometimes in the saddle and again on foot, going often at some urgent call with no provision for the morrow, with not even a thought of what they should eat, or what they should wear, or where they should lodge. So, seventeen hundred years before, had the faithful twelve gone forth with "neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses, nor scrip for the journey." O grand men—so glorious in your faith, so heroic in your endeavors to bring light into all the dark places—what does not the world owe you, even outside the immediate sharers of your faith?

Thousands flocked to these open-air meetings. In more than one instance the crowd was estimated at over twenty thousand; often it numbered ten thousand. But these crowds were not always quiet and attentive; indeed, they were oftener the reverse. At times they consisted of an angry and discontented multitude with faces flushed, eyes flashing ominously, and tongues uttering fierce invectives against the

preacher. Again, a surging human mass shouted out savage curses and threats, while stones, sticks, rotten eggs, lumps of mud, and every conceivable missile were hurled at the preacher, sometimes cutting deep gashes that caused the blood to stream over his face, or knocking him senseless. Every now and then, led by a still more vindictive spirit, the crowd would press around the rude box-pulpit, overturn it, and nearly strip the clothes from the preacher in striving to trample him in the mud; but God always protected his zealous servants. Nor were these the only persecutions. They were more than once carried before an English court, surrounded by a howling mob that did not consist of common people alone, and made to pay heavy fines for "trespassing upon ground to which they had no right." Once a "nobleman"—what a sad misnomer!—sued one of the Wesleys for simply passing through his grounds on his way to an appointment. That the English court, professing to be a court of justice, imposed in fine and costs the sum of one hundred dollars shows the blinded and prejudicial spirit against which these brave men had to contend. As true servants of their Lord—willing to be abused, even spit upon and stoned for his sake, as he had been for theirs—they kept on their way. The same spirit enabled those who came after them to imitate their example; the same spirit made heroes of cowards and soldiers of servants. Years after in the New World, where other intrepid warriors went forth to conquer the hosts of sin, it was this same fervid inspiration of heroic ex-

ample that made the icy currents of the overflowed rivers, the mud sloughs of the almost impenetrable swamps, the cutting blasts of the winter winds, the beat of the rain, tempest, hunger, cold, deprivations, sufferings, seem as naught so long as the soul-fire glowed within.

During this year, which extended well into that of 1740, the two brothers and Whitefield traveled over hundreds of miles of country, preaching, singing, and entreating the lost to come to an ever present and loving Saviour. Of the magnitude of this work we may have some idea when we learn that within this space John Wesley alone preached no less than five hundred sermons, and only eight of them in churches. Nor was England the only ground covered. From Bristol both Wesley and Whitefield penetrated into Wales. Of this movement, so richly fruitful in results, we shall hear more in its proper place.

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THE FIRST LOVE-FEAST OF METHODISM.

ALTHOUGH John and Charles Wesley were now boldly engaged in preaching the new religion of salvation by faith, they were still members of the Church of England. It had grieved them deeply to see the fierce opposition with which they were everywhere met. Their most delicate feelings had been frequently trampled upon by those calling themselves brothers in Christ. More than once the temptation had come to them to withdraw from a connection in which they experienced only bitterness and opposi-

tion, and found a Church of their own. But they were good men as well as true Churchmen, having much of that brotherly patience, that real charity, which makes one willing to endure even the bitterness of persecution for the sake of harmony. Besides, it was painful for them to think of severing themselves through religious differences from a Church in the faith of which they had been born and reared, and of which their father had been such a zealous minister and their mother so bright and shining a light. Their great hope was that they might yet open the eyes of their misguided brethren to the only true and living way, through Jesus the Saviour. Then, indeed, would the Church become one that they could in very truth call their own.

As time passed, however, they realized more and more despairingly that such a result for the Church as a whole could never be reached. But even then a deeper sense of faith and loyalty than many in their position would have displayed kept them from making an open break. The most that they did was to attach themselves to one of those societies which, succeeding the death of Cromwell and not long after the re-establishment of the Church of England, were formed by some devout members for the purpose of engaging in "more intimate and sympathetic religious exercises than the Church service offered." Among these people were a number of Moravians, and in the society which the Wesleys joined they were not long in finding that "love and fellowship" which they had so ardently craved. From these so-

cieties came many of those earnest and devoted spirits afterward known as "Methodists."

On the night preceding the first of January, 1739—as the two Wesleys and Whitefield, together with about sixty of the "brethren," members of the society, were at a "watch-meeting" in Fetter-lane—occurred that remarkable scene which may properly be called "the first love-feast of Methodism." From twelve at night until three in the morning they had either remained upon their knees in prayer or spent the hours in recounting their many and varied experiences or in the sweet singing of inspiring song. At the latter-named hour, as they were continuing "instant in prayer," the power of God came so mightily upon them that many fell prostrate to the ground, while others, springing up, shouted aloud for joy. Truly it was a scene to awe and amaze the most indifferent looker-on. Since the Pentecostal shower that descended upon the Master's chosen ones at Jerusalem, *what* had the world seen like unto this? As soon as they had recovered somewhat from the mighty power that held them, they broke forth as with one voice: "We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord!" They continued shouting and praising until tired nature could hold out no longer. There have been many similar scenes, but, recalling the intense fervor of our Methodist fathers and mothers of those early days, one cannot help exclaiming with a zealous member of one of our large but lukewarm city churches: "O for the days of the good old-fashioned Methodist love-feasts!"

Methodism may be said to have really begun at this love-feast. Four days later, on the fifth of January, another "feast of love" was held at Islington. There the three itinerants "conferred together" with others, seven in all, concerning "matters of importance." Afterward they engaged in fasting and prayer and in sweet communion among themselves, during which a "deep conviction of their calling and a deep sense of power were given them." They finally closed the meeting with the conviction that God was about to do "great things" for them. Indeed he was! How great, let the mighty marching host of Methodism, now five and a half million strong, bear witness.



WHITEFIELD AND WESLEY AT KINGSWOOD COLLIERY.

ABOUT the middle of February, 1739, finding himself completely shut out from all the churches in both London and Bristol, Whitefield determined to proceed to the coal-mines at Kingswood, and there among the miners—at that time the most ignorant and degraded of all Englishmen—inaugurate his field-preaching in earnest.

Kingswood had been formerly what is known as a "royal chase"—that is, one of the hunting-grounds of the royal family. It was a magnificent estate, containing between three and four thousand acres. But some years previous to Whitefield's visit all these tracts of land had been gradually appropriated by the several greedy and autocratic lords whose estates surrounded Kingswood. The vast herds of deer that

formerly roamed across it had now entirely disappeared, either at the approach of more stirring life or as victims of the chase. Where the deer had ranged, and the hunters had feasted and made merrymerry over some fine trophy, were now the deep and yawning mouths of coal-pits or the rude huts of the miners.

These miners were as low and degraded as could be imagined, differing in appearance and dialect from the members of the few old baronial families by which they were surrounded as the leaves of the cactus differ from those of the lordly oak. They had no schools, no house of worship, no religious belief—in short, no softening and refining influences of any kind. But worse than any of these, they were a most depraved and utterly reckless class of men. “Inconceivably barbarous and ignorant, they trampled on all laws, human and divine, and hesitated not to set the magistrates at defiance.” Murders and robberies were of such frequent occurrence that it had long since become exceedingly dangerous, even in open day, to pass near the scene of their labors.

These, then, were the people to whom the ardent and devoted Whitefield, with the flames of an immortal fire blazing within his heart and borne as though on the rushing wings of his Master’s love, had determined to become the first evangelist, the first to tell their sin-dyed souls of the all-cleansing power of a Saviour’s blood.

On February 17 he stood upon a gentle elevation on the south side of Kingswood, known as Hannam

Mount, and there, under an old sycamore made forever memorable, preached his first sermon to the colliers, two hundred in all. He could not see that much impression was made at this start. It was all so new, so startling, so incomprehensible to these well-nigh savage people. They heard in wonder—many in open and rude disapprobation.

But if this preaching failed to have its effect upon the colliers, it did not upon the rigid Church of England people, who caught all sorts of rumors in regard to it in their surrounding homes. They were not backward in expressing their chagrin and disgust. It was so unchurchly, such a shocking departure from all previous rules and usages! And Mr. Whitefield professing to be a clergyman of the Church of England, too! Who ever had heard of a clergyman being so “irregular” as to preach in the open air? As if there *could* be any religion *outside the churches!* All of which, we suppose, implied that the Lord would not reveal himself to his seekers *outside* the stuffy old recesses of the buildings peculiarly sanctified to his service through black-gowned ecclesiasts, vellum-bound prayer-books, and silk-robed devotees. But Whitefield, the zealous servant of his Master, the reverent and believing son of his heavenly Father, had a broader and more liberal opinion of his Lord than this. Assuredly the heavens were his throne and the earth his footstool, or else there was naught of truth in what his own Word declared.

At the second Kingswood service there were no less than two thousand hearers, for the colliers had

now brought their wives and children to listen to the man whose words thrilled them with a sensation different from any they had ever experienced. What a swelling of the ranks was this—an increase from two hundred to two thousand—and how the hand of the Lord seemed working in it all! At the third service there were fully four thousand, while at the fifth the four thousand had swelled into ten thousand. Whitefield had never preached with such affecting power. The very Spirit of the Lord seemed to breathe from his every utterance, while the force of his words was like that of the rushing winds that sweep all before them.

At first little order had been kept at these meetings, though strange to say, considering the character these men bore, there was no effort made to harm Whitefield. Under his preaching they seemed so little like the men they had been represented that one could scarcely believe that the hands of some of them were dyed with human blood. As bad as was their reputation, as desperate as many of them appeared, they had none of the malignancy of the London and Bristol mobs. Murderers though some of them were, and defiant violators of the law, they were yet not so hardened as to be untouched by the fearlessness and devotion of the man who cared so much for their poor lost souls as to face probable death to come and tell them of their condition. Truly, in the most unpromising material does the mighty leaven of God's wondrous love and power sometimes work the most astonishing results.

When the colliers first began to assemble at these meetings they would hoot at each other and make faces; then, as if moved by a common impulse, shout, "Hurrah! hurrah!" and stamp about in a spirit of reckless jollity. Again, they would bellow as if they were the veritable wild beasts they had been represented, or under the sweeping power of the preachers' burning words burst into tears and cry for pardon from their sins. Sometimes a most pathetic picture would be spoiled by the burly men comically poking one another in the ribs while their lips shouted "Halleluia!" Indeed, the whole scene was a mixture of the comic and the tragic—a strange blending of such elements of good and evil as often mystified and perplexed even the hopeful Whitefield.

But hundreds of these poor creatures—ignorant, rude, debased as they were—were made happy in the knowledge of Christ. Standing unwashed, uncombed, just as they had come from the coal-pits, with their shovels and picks upon their shoulders, the sooty dust of their working-places covering their faces and begriming their hair, the tears making white gutters down their blackened cheeks, they listened to the story as old as the hills of the earth, and yet as ever new as the sun that greets us fair and radiant each morning that we wake. It was all new to them—this story of a loving and gentle Saviour who had come into the world to bear its crosses and persecutions for them, crowning the sacrifice at last with an agonized death that through that death they might find an entrance into life eternal. Who before had told

them of this Saviour? Who had thought enough of their miserable, lost condition to speak the words that were to make of their turbulent hearts the home of a faith most beautiful? And now came this man upon whose face they had never looked before, of whom they had never even heard; this man who regarded them not with horror and loathing, but with the eye of pity—ay, of love—who grasped them by the hand, dirt-stained, coal-begrimed, even blood-dyed as many of them were, and declared all men brothers, brothers in Christ Jesus. It is no wonder that they listened, repented, believed, and were saved. And yet this man who in a few short hours had done what all the black-gowned clergy of London and Bristol, yea, I might say of all England, had failed to do in years—brought scores of lost souls to Christ—was shut out from the churches, given the cold shoulder by their clergymen, denounced as a mischief-maker and fanatic, and called in derision a “Methodist.”

Finding the crowds to swell even far beyond the compass of his magnetic voice, Whitefield wrote for Wesley to come and help him. The latter began the journey the last of March, and after stopping at Bristol and other places by the way, reached Kingswood about the second week in April. The next day he stood upon the same rise of ground that Whitefield had occupied, and, facing an assembly which swelled into the thousands, gave forth to them the glad proclamation, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.” How eager these thirsty souls

were to come was forcibly shown by their conscience-stricken faces as they pressed around him; by their trembling hands outstretched, as if merely to touch him would cause the living waters to flow; by the writhing forms prostrate upon the ground and crying out to the Lord for mercy. The scene stirred John Wesley's soul as no other had done, and caused the fountain of love within his heart to flow out in deeper streams toward his fallen fellow-men. It gave him a clearer insight into the work for which God was preparing him, and caused him to see how the lowest of earth's creatures might become wondrous examples of the power of God's redeeming love. Something else it did too, not exactly for Wesley, but for all England—that is, for such portions of England as heard the astounding story of the wholesale conversion of the Kingswood miners; this was to exhibit, in lines which the most blindly prejudiced could not fail to read, the undeniable evidence that the “revival of the Methodists” had a “transforming power” that was most unaccountable.

Seeing the power that Wesley had acquired over the miners, Whitefield now determined to leave them in his hands and make a journey into Wales. Before he left, however, a most impressive scene took place. In passing through Kingswood he was met by a large number of the colliers who entreated him to remain another day among them, as they had prepared an “entertainment” for him, and were also desirous of giving him subscriptions for a charity-school to be established in their midst. He remained not only

one day but several, during which the corner-stone of the building was laid. At the end of the ceremonies all present knelt upon the ground, while Whitefield, in his most impassioned tones, prayed that the gates of hell might not prevail against the enterprise. The "amens" of the colliers were hearty and vigorous.

The building of this school soon fell into Wesley's hands. He did his work well and faithfully, gaining the gratitude of the thousands of poor miners so deeply interested. Several years afterward he also founded at Kingswood, out of the receipts of his fellowship at Oxford, a school for the children of his itinerant ministers. It need scarcely be added that from that day to this Kingswood has been a sacred spot in Methodist history.

* * *

SCENES UNDER WESLEY'S PREACHING.

ESPECIALLY in the first year of Wesley's field-preaching many remarkable scenes occurred. And it is a noteworthy circumstance that while the preaching of both Whitefield and Charles Wesley was equally as faithful as that of John, and far more impassioned and eloquent, yet there were no such "signs" and demonstrations attending their efforts as those attending John Wesley's. He was himself at a loss to account for these demonstrations beyond the notion that a "strong, lively, and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death should affect the body as well as the soul."

But as these “bodily demonstrations” were to some extent experienced in the preaching of the others—many turning to Christ while loudly weeping, or beating upon their breasts in the agony of their souls’ despair—we must look for something peculiarly Wesley’s own in his style of preaching to produce results hitherto so unusual and astounding. In this search we shall not have far to go when we recall the quiet force of Wesley’s bearing, the solemn power of his words, the clear, penetrating gaze of his eyes that seemed to read the innermost thought or send the shaft of conviction straight home to the mark. It was not surprising that those poor souls, torn with conviction or consumed by the raging fires of remorse, looked upon him not only as a powerful accuser but as a possible avenger. Rent with conflicting thoughts, lashed by the scorpion stings of conscience, it seemed that his calm, piercing eyes were upon them in whatever direction they turned, as if his words were burning into their very souls. Thus driven within themselves—shaken as by a spiritual earthquake, torn, distracted—they soon lost their self-control, and either swooned away or cried aloud in their anguish, distorting their faces or rending their clothes as if possessed of the very devils of which we read in the Bible. Another powerful characteristic of Wesley’s preaching was that he made each person addressed feel that he was speaking to that one individually, as if he had purposely singled him out from the rest of the crowd.

On April 17, 1739, Wesley was preaching at Bald-

win street. At the close of one of his most forcible sermons upon the future state of the lost, he called upon God to confirm his words. Almost immediately a woman who stood near him began to utter sharp, piercing cries as though in the agonies of death, and finally fell prostrate before him. He at once began praying for her, and continued wrestling with God in prayer until "a new song was put in her mouth, even a thanksgiving unto the Lord." While he was praying two others began calling upon the Lord, groaning, crying, and beating themselves upon their breasts. Wesley prayed still more earnestly until they also "burst forth into praise to God their Saviour." Then another began to cry unto God for mercy as though "out of the very bowels of hell," Wesley tells us. He was a stranger in Bristol, but soon he too was "overwhelmed with joy and love."

On April 21, while Wesley was preaching, a young man was seized with violent trembling, and suddenly staggering fell as though smitten by a heavy hand. He lay motionless as one dead for some time, then regained consciousness, shouting God's praises. A week later, as Wesley was discoursing at Newgate, he suddenly called upon God to bear witness to his word. Forthwith one and another and another dropped down before him, until twenty or more lay as if stricken by the lightning's bolt. At Baldwin street on the first of May his voice could scarcely be heard for the groans and cries of those calling upon the Lord to save them. A Quaker stood by, showing his anger at these demonstrations by knitting his brows

and biting his lips. Directly he too dropped as if impelled downward by some powerful force. The agony he was in Wesley describes as "most terrible to behold," but as soon as they prayed with him he lifted his head in joy and shouted aloud.

A forcible incident recorded at this time is that of John Haydon, a weaver. He was a man of irreproachable life morally, and a regular attendant upon the sacrament and other Church services. He was present in Baldwin street when so many fell before Wesley as if lightning had struck them; and when the hitherto irate and unbelieving Quaker changed into the convicted and shouting one, Haydon was loud in his denunciation of the whole scene, declaring it was all "a delusion of the devil." But the next day, while reading one of Wesley's sermons, "Salvation by Faith," he suddenly changed color, fell off his chair, and began screaming and beating himself against the floor. When Wesley, who was sent for, came into his presence, Haydon cried out: "Ay, this is he I said deceived the people; but God has overtaken me! I said it was a delusion of the devil, but *this* is no delusion." Then he roared out: "O thou devil! thou cursed devil!—yea, thou legion of devils!—thou canst not stay in me; Christ will cast thee out! I know his work is begun! Tear me in pieces, if thou wilt, but thou canst not hurt me!" He then beat himself violently upon the floor, tearing his clothes, while his breast heaved as though rent by the pangs of death, and great drops of sweat trickled from his face. Wesley began praying for

him fervently. In a short while the throes of the tortured one ceased, and "both his body and soul were set at liberty." A few days later Wesley, returning to see him, found that he had lost his voice, while his body was as weak as that of an infant; but his soul was in peace, full of love, and "rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God."

Once a young woman became so powerfully convicted under Wesley's preaching that she sprung up and fled to her home, feeling herself unable to longer meet the gaze of those clear and searching eyes, and not caring to "expose herself" by shouting out in the meeting. But, although she had run out from under the eyes of Wesley, she had not escaped those of the All-seeing One nor the whisperings of his Spirit. In the street she uttered the very cries and shoutings from which she had fled, and after exhausting herself fell upon the ground senseless, and had to be carried home. When consciousness again returned, her lamentations and entreaties for mercy broke forth afresh. She was in a sore way, and would have died but for Wesley's praying and singing with her, which soon brought her tortured soul into the fullness of peace.

"On October 23," says Wesley, "I was pressed to visit a young woman at Kingswood. I found her on the bed, two or three persons holding her. Anguish, horror, and despair above all description appeared in her face. The thousand distortions of her whole body showed how the dogs of hell were gnawing at her heart. The shrieks intermixed were scarce to be en-

dured. She screamed out: 'I am damned, damned, lost forever! Six days ago you might have helped me, but it is past! I am the devil's now; I have given myself to him; I am his; him I must serve; with him must I go to hell; I cannot be saved; I will not be saved; I must, I will, I *will* be damned!' She then began praying to the devil. We began, 'Arm of the Lord, awake! awake!' She immediately sunk down as asleep, but as soon as we left off broke out again with inexpressible vehemence. . . . We continued in prayer until past eleven, when God in a moment spoke peace to her soul."

"Four days later," he further writes, "I was sent for to go to Kingswood again to one of those who had been so ill before. A violent rain began just as I set out. Just at that time the woman—three miles off—cried out, 'Yonder comes Wesley galloping as fast as he can!' When I was come she burst into a horrid laugh and said: 'No power, no power! no faith, no faith! She is *mine*! her soul is *mine*! I have her, and will not let her go!' Meanwhile her pangs increased more and more. . . . One who was clearly convinced that this was no natural disorder said, 'I think Satan is let loose; I fear he will not stop here;' and added, 'I command thee in the name of the Lord Jesus to tell if thou hast commission to torment any other soul.' It was immediately answered: 'I have; L——y C——r and S——h J——s.' We betook ourselves to prayer again, and ceased not until she began with a clear voice and composed, cheerful look to sing, 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.'"

At this time L——y C——r and S——h J——s were in perfect health, and living some distance away; yet Wesley writes the next day:

“October 28.—I called at Mrs. J——s’s at Kingswood. L——y C——r and S——h J——s were there. It was scarce a quarter of an hour before the former fell into a strange agony, and presently after, the latter. The violent convulsions all over their bodies were such as words cannot describe. Their cries and groans were horrid to be borne. We poured out our souls before God until L——y C——r’s agonies so increased that it seemed she was in the pangs of death. But in a moment God spoke, and both her body and soul were healed.”

Perhaps the most marvelous case of all was that which occurred on November 30, “when seven persons were grievously tormented; and Wesley and his friends continued in prayer from the time of evening service till nine o’clock next morning, or about fifteen hours—a case almost unparalleled in the history of the Church.”

No wonder the Lord of harvests gave such rich results, when those who tended the whitened fields were so steadfast in endurance, so abundant in faith!



THE FIRST METHODIST CHAPEL.

THE corner-stone for the first Methodist chapel in the world was laid at Bristol, England, on May 12, 1739. By this time several “societies” had been organized at London and Bristol, and at other places.

Gradually the followers of Wesley and Whitefield had withdrawn from the Moravian societies and formed those exclusively their own. Wesley heartily approved of this movement, although he did not take the final step of separating from his German brethren until a year later. Many of the beliefs embodied in the Moravian doctrine he had found it impossible to accept, and hence thought it far better to quietly withdraw than to come to the open rupture of a discussion. But doubtless one of the chief causes of this separation was in the openly avowed doctrine of these Moravians that in "true stillness" dwelt the highest religious attainment. To shout, therefore, and to cry out under the fervor of intense religious feeling, as so many of the Methodists were doing, was viewed with much horror by their "still-tongued brethren." But notwithstanding Wesley gave his sanction to the withdrawal of his people from the Moravian societies, and afterward came out himself, he still remembered these brethren with the most grateful emotions; for what did he not owe them?

This year, then (1739), which marked the springing into existence of these separate societies may properly be called the birth-year of Methodism, and is so accepted by Methodists everywhere.

The corner-stone of the first chapel of these Methodist societies was laid with the "voice of praise and thanksgiving." The structure was near to St. James Church-yard, in what was known as "The Horse-fair," and was for many years called "The New Room," and after that "The Old Room, Bristol."

The name "chapel" then signified a house erected for public worship, but not having "the full character of a church," just as the Methodist societies were not accorded the "full character" of a religious sect. But in spite of this limitation the "societies" continued to increase in numbers and influence.

Although the Bristol chapel was the first to be built, another structure bears the honor of being really the "cradle of Methodism," since it was the first opened for worship. It may therefore in all justness be called "The First Methodist Chapel." This last was the old half-ruined building in Moorfields which the Government had used as a foundry for casting cannon. It had been unoccupied for twenty years, and was fast falling into decay. The story of its desertion was that in recasting the guns "taken from the French in the campaigns of Marlborough a terrible explosion blew off the roof, shook the building, and killed several of the workmen." It was consequently abandoned, and the royal foundry removed to Woolwich.

Two strangers, who had been well impressed by the preaching of some of the Methodist missionaries, came to Wesley and asked him to preach in this deserted building, offering if he would do so to aid him in fitting it up. Mr. Wesley accepted their offer, and on November 11, 1739, it was for the first time opened for service. We can well imagine what a glad day that was for the good people who had long been worshiping in the open air, with the canopy of heaven alone for their covering.

The opening of this chapel was considered as the true epoch of Methodism; and on the same day of the present century—that is, in 1839—the Centennial of Methodism was observed with appropriate ceremonies throughout the different countries in which it had become so great a power.

The building which had once composed the royal foundry, but was now transformed into a Methodist chapel, stood near to where Finsbury Square, London, now is. Behind it was the parsonage in which Mr. Wesley lived when in London, where his mother soon came to reside with him, and where three years later was witnessed that glorious death-bed scene which sent her sons forth newly equipped for the contest before them.

Leading from Mr. Wesley's house to the church was a passage through which he could enter the chapel unseen from the outside. On one side of the chapel was a school-room for the children, and on the other side two rooms, in one of which books were kept for sale, the other being set apart for charitable purposes. The interior of the foundry was fitted up very much after the fashion of a church, while on the outside it had the old grim, queer look. The building was of brick, and about one hundred and twenty feet long by ninety-five in width. The seating capacity of the part used as a chapel was fifteen hundred. All the benches were without backs except about "a dozen seats with back-rails for the weaker women in front." At the top of the building there was a bell which was rung every morning before

preaching at five o'clock, and as a summons also to the other services. How different the hours kept then by these devout Methodists from those kept now! As there were at that day no lamps in that part of London, how impressive must have been the sight as on the dark winter mornings these faithful worshipers, with their lanterns, made their way to the services! And how deeply solemn the scene on the inside when the quiet and orderly congregation took their places and bowed their heads in fervent waiting upon God!

In the year in which the old Foundry Church was opened for service there came into being what were known as "The Bands." These were companies of converted men set to watch over and inspire the faith of other men and women. It was their duty to meet once each week, calling the band together, and engage with them in services of prayer and song and in the telling of individual experiences. These gatherings are now known as "class-meetings" wherever the followers of John Wesley have zealously kept their Methodist faith.

How deep and soul-stirring were some of the scenes at these "band-meetings!" There "the rich and the poor met together" in holy, happy communion; there the hand of fainting, discouraged brother or sister was warmly grasped and words of cheer and comfort spoken. There, like the members of one loving, happy family they met to strengthen one another against the snares of sin, and to pray for renewed grace from the one Father of them all. It was a

moving power—a warm, inspiring force wisely put into operation and deeply felt almost from the beginning of the religious movement known as Methodism, and which to this day has given to it abiding strength.

As to the old church itself—the cradle in which the infant Methodism first threw off its swaddling-clothes and lay in the white and glistening purity of its christening-robcs—most gracious is the memory of it that remains! It was here that the fire of John Wesley's preaching, the impassioned sweetness of Charles Wesley's exhortations, and the smiting force of Whitefield's eloquence laid out sinners before them as the sweeping winds lay the burdened sheaves. It was here that many faithful soldiers were won to the great King and sent forth to battle for him; here that the first Conference of Methodism met to knit more firmly the tie that bound their hearts together in Christian love; and here that Susanna Wesley, the "Mother of Methodism," while partaking of the holy communion, first *felt* that witness of God's Spirit with her own spirit which made her testify so gloriously to the joys of *free* salvation.

* * *

WESLEY AND BEAU NASH.

THE wholesale conversion of the miserable colliers of Kingswood raised a storm of persecution throughout England. Not only was all manner of evil spoken against the preachers, both in private and public, but Wesley himself tells us that the people were

everywhere stirred up against them and aroused to the fierceness of wild, ungovernable beasts. On every side was heard the cry, "Knock the mad dogs on the head!" To add still further to the harrowing situation, when complaint was made of this savage violence, no magistrate could be found who would do them justice. "We were assaulted and abused on every side," says Wesley. "We were everywhere represented as mad dogs, and treated accordingly. We were stoned in the streets, and several times narrowly escaped with our lives. In sermons, newspapers, and pamphlets of all kinds we were painted as unheard-of monsters. But this moved us not; we went on testifying salvation by faith both to small and great, and not counting our lives dear unto ourselves so we might finish our course with joy."

At Penford the curate's excuse for not letting Wesley preach in his church was that he had heard he was mad, and he did not care to have his congregation imbibing the sentiments of a madman. Wesley, undaunted, took his stand in the open air and began the services with one of those soul-inspiring songs which he and his gifted brother left as a rich legacy to our Methodism. All was quiet during the singing, but in the midst of the prayer that followed two men, hired expressly for the purpose, began to sing light, worldly ballads in their loudest voice. This caused Mr. Wesley and his followers to sing their hymns in tones equally loud. For nearly an hour the battle of the notes waged with increasing energy and determination on both sides. Then these noisy,

brawling singers of the world, being overcome by the masterful harmony of those who sung in the Lord's praise, or put to rout by the unconquerable vim of the "preaching man" and his followers, gave up the fight and crept off like beaten curs.

At Bath Wesley met with a "difficulty" of another sort. Bath was a fashionable watering-place, and at that time it was crowded with visitors. Among these was a celebrated fop, Beau Nash by name, who not only "set the fashion for men's clothes, but also prescribed it for the ladies." This man was one of the most vicious of his day, yet he was smiled upon and courted by all those fashionable people, and looked up to as the grand master of ceremonies on every occasion, if it were only a light dance or a bumper drank to royal health. All of which goes to show that so-called "fashionable society" is a very loose, disjointed thing indeed. We may well believe that all this homage and flattery rendered Beau Nash a very self-conceited and pompous fellow. In fact, the cut of his clothes alone conveyed the impression of a man pretty well assured of his own importance.

Hearing of Wesley's proposed visit to Bath, Beau publicly gave out that he meant to meet "the preaching fellow" and crush and mortify him in the presence of all the people. This widely uttered and boastful threat had the effect of bringing together on the day of Wesley's appointment by far the largest audience of purely fashionable people to whom he had yet preached. But this only gave him the broader opportunity; "for," said he, "I told them the

Scripture had concluded them all under sin, high and low, rich and poor, one with another."

Previous to Wesley's visit to Bath some of his more timid friends, who had heard of Beau Nash's boast, tried to dissuade him from going, fearing not only mortification for him, but insult as well. But the man who had faced the sticks and stones of infuriated mobs, who had been beaten, bruised, and even trampled upon, was not the one to fall back now at the boastful words of a consequential dandy.

Wesley was well started in his discourse, and was noting with inward surprise and satisfaction that many of those present were just "sinking apace into seriousness," when Beau, in his immense white hat, wide ruffles, and gold-embroidered waistcoat, came edging his way through the crowds until he stood directly in front of the preacher.

"By what authority, sir," he demanded of Wesley, "do you do what you are doing?"

Fixing his piercing blue eyes full upon him—those eyes that could glitter like the clear, cold luster of steel or express the softened tenderness of a smiling sky, those eyes that days later on Moorfields Common by one look sent the shaft of conviction home to the soul of the poor dream-haunted, sin-lashed John Nelson—Wesley calmly returned: "By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by him who is now Archbishop of Canterbury when he laid his hands upon me and said, 'Take thou the authority to preach the gospel.'"

"But this," returned the somewhat disconcerted

Beau, "is a conventicle,* and contrary to act of Parliament."

"No," returned Wesley, still steadily looking him in the eye, "conventicles are seditious meetings; but here is no sedition—therefore it is not contrary to act of Parliament."

"But I say it is!" almost shouted this "bedecked hero of Bath," trying to confuse the unflinching gaze of those blue eyes; "and, besides, your preaching frightens people out of their wits."

"Sir," questioned Wesley, "did you ever hear me preach?"

"No," admitted Beau.

"Well then, how can you judge of what you never heard?"

"I judge by common report."

"Common report is not enough. Give me leave to ask you, sir, is not your name Nash?"

"It is," replied the fast-wilting Beau.

"Well then, sir, I dare not judge of *you* by common report; I think it not enough to judge by." Here Wesley fixed upon him a look that was sufficient to pierce him through and through, and kept it there till Nash, after trying to stammer out a few words, was overcome with confusion and slunk away.

It was by just such fearless tactics that the founder of the Methodist faith vanquished the emissaries of Satan.

* A name formerly applied by way of reproach to an assembly or meeting of English Non-conformists—that is, those who had broken away from the forms of the Established Church.

"THE WORLD IS MY PARISH."

STANDING upon the summit of Hannam Mount, Kingswood Colliery, John Wesley had earnestly and fearlessly announced to the thirsting multitudes the gracious invitation of the loving Master: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink!" As he stood looking out upon the listening thousands "so calmly joined together in solemn waiting upon God," or as the winter evening drew on apace and the thousands still kept their places as one man, all hanging upon his words or all "alike affected and drenched in tears together," many and varied feelings struggled for the mastery. He thought of himself, of his career at Oxford, of the sheafless time passed as his father's curate, of his conversation with the "serious man," of his return to the University, of his joining the "Holy Club," of the days he had spent in bearing about a lamp which, like those of the foolish virgins, merely smoked without burning, and then of the glad, joyous, radiant time when the oil had been suddenly poured into the lamp and it had blazed with a flame that illumined all the way. Then came thoughts of his pure and earnest desire to herald the glad tidings abroad, of his honest efforts to labor faithfully in his Master's vineyard, of his fond hope that from a Church and clergy acknowledging Christ as its divine Governor he would receive only welcome and encouragement in his endeavors to proclaim that same Christ as the very Fountain-head of all pure religion. But alas! he had been barred from its pulpits, censured by its

clergy, and denounced by its people. He had been called by all the vile epithets in the vocabulary of mean and bigoted natures. And why had it been so? For what was he thus maltreated and abused? Of what terrible sin had he been guilty, that his Church should exclude him from her communions? He had simply cut loose from the old outward forms and formalities of a half-hearted religion, and declared openly for one that had in it the very spirit of Him whence it sprung.

Let us briefly go over what John Wesley believed, the things which he desired to teach in all their untainted wholesomeness. He believed, first, that a rigid conformity to the rules of the Established Church, good works, and even charity, might exist without religion—that is, without that pure religion that springs alone from the love of Christ in the heart. Second, that this genuine religion could be gained only through repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Third, that this faith in Christ, this “heartly surrender and unfaltering trust,” this “taking God at his word,” brings to the soul a surer knowledge of its acceptance with God. This is all that man can do; the rest is with God. Fourth, that as a result of this faith, this acceptance with God, man has in this world “a taste of the heaven to which he is going, and is made happy and to rejoice and praise God often with loud halleluiahs by a power that is in him and yet not of him.”

This is a simple, sound platform, upon which all men might stand—Christian, Pagan, and Jew; a

clear yet liberal faith which all might trustingly accept—the very heart and soul and marrow of the Christian doctrine as Christ had himself declared it seventeen hundred years before. And yet, for preaching the very truths which his divine Master had proclaimed before him, this man had been denounced as an alien and a traitor by those calling themselves his fellow-disciples in Christ! As his eyes rested upon the pathetic picture of the tear-drenched thousands imploring to be fed with the bread eternal, it is no wonder that these thoughts should have surged through his heart as the waves of a turbulent sea, or that in following them his soul should have gone out to these stricken spirits in a yearning that for the time quite overcame him. In thinking of this time afterward, and of the emotions which swayed him on that occasion, he uttered the memorable words that have been the grand trumpet-call of Methodism through the century and a half that its hosts have marched on to the possession of the waste places of the earth: “I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. . . . I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean that in whatever part of it I am I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation.”

“The world is my parish!” Broad, liberal, consecrated, soul-enkindling Christian words. From the doors of their churches they had turned the man who uttered them, and in derision they called him “a Methodist.” “A Methodist?” What term of re-

proach did the name imply? If to call one a Methodist was because he had the love of Jesus flaming in his heart, then in truth he was a Methodist. If to be a Methodist was to crave to tell others of the fire burning within, to desire to lead them out of the chill and gloom of the night into the warmth and radiance of their Father's mansion, then most assuredly he was a Methodist. If to yearn over every man as his brother, to long to penetrate the uttermost ends of the earth carrying the tidings of great joy, then beyond a doubt the name was deserved.

"The world is my parish!" Grand words with which to inspire the loyal spirits that were to come after! Glorious sentiment with which to enkindle the fires of brotherly love and Christian devotion! Born amidst the yearning throbs of John Wesley's soul as he gazed upon the tear-stricken thousands pressing around him at Hannam Mount, it grew into something more than a mere sentiment, into an ever-living presence. It carried him into the heart of papist-cursed Ireland; it went with him into the mountain fastnesses of Wales; it remained beside him when on the Scottish moors he stood contending with "the prejudices of man and the evil spirit of the devil." It sustained him in the presence of hooting mobs; it eased the pain of fiendish blows; it took the sting from scorn, the hurt from persecution, and it ever brought him nearer the great Father of all.

"The world is my parish!" Sentiment or inspiration, mistaken fire or divinely enkindled flame—

whichever it might be, or by whatsoever name it might be called—the symptoms, like the “boasted fixedness of Rome,” were “always and everywhere the same.” It burned within George Whitefield’s heart as the good ship bore him on his mission to the Indians in the wild Western Continent; it whispered divinely in his ear of hundreds of helpless orphan children for whom a home might be provided; it carried him overflowing with zeal to his glorious work in the Kingswood collieries, and blazed in his eyes and surged in his heart as he went to face the half-drunken and half-mad rabble of Vanity Fair.

“The world is my parish!” It rung in the clarion utterances of the unquenchable young spirits who heard the call from the wilds of America and with a heroism worthy of the old martyr days cried, “Here I am! send *me!*” It carried Francis Asbury to America; it cheered his soul in the midst of hardships sufficient to appall a hero’s heart; it went with him in the two hundred and seventy thousand miles traveled through a wild, inhospitable country, that the joy of the Master’s words might ring as a glad voice through all the wilderness places; it glowed as a brilliant flame amidst the vigils of dreary nights that he spent alone in the forests of the savage; it warmed his heart against the icy currents, and leaped “a fire divine” as in the mud of the Carolina swamps he knelt to pray with the negro ferryman. It bore Thomas Coke eighteen times across the Atlantic; it gave him the faith and the grace to firmly endure unto the end, sending him at seventy years of age,

burning with missionary zeal for India, to find a grave in the bosom of the Indian Ocean.

“The world is my parish!” From then till now it has run as a vitalizing current through the veins of hundreds of good and true men and women who, laying all aside, have answered the call from stricken lands across the sea. It has unstopped the ears of long-dulled indifference, awakened the hearts that slept the entranced sleep of the Brahmans, and sent them, all glowing with the Master’s zeal, a willing sacrifice upon the altar of missionary consecration.

“The world is my parish!” It sends the hand deep down into the pockets to bring forth the needed dollars more freely. It gives fresh bread in greater abundance to the hungry poor, and consigns the musty loaf to its rightful place among the slops of the kitchen.

Yes, “sentiment or inspiration, mistaken fire or divinely enkindled flame,” whichever it may be, it ever dwells within the hearts of those who, irrespective of Church or creed, truly love Him who is the Maker of all.

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WHITEFIELD AT MOORFIELDS COMMON.

RETURNING to London from his journey into Wales, his heart still aglow with the zeal that had carried him as an evangelist to the miserable colliers of Kingswood, Whitefield now determined to lift up his voice in some of the many haunts of sin in and around the great city. Prominent among these was Moorfields, a large common just without the limits

of the "old north city wall." A few years before it attracted Whitefield's attention it had been an extensive marsh, which was altogether impassable during a greater part of the year; but since that time it had been partly drained, and at one side a brick-kiln had been erected. Here, it is said, the first bricks used in London were made. After this the field was still further drained, and was next used as a practice-ground for some of the archery clubs of the city. Subsequently it was laid out into walks, and given the name of the City Mall. At the time Whitefield was regarding it as a suitable place in which to attack the powers of darkness, it had become a general rallying-ground where, on Sundays especially, the worst elements of the city engaged in revels of the most shameful sort. There were wrestlers, boxers, mountebanks, puppet-showmen, exhibitors of wild beasts, harlequins, drummers, trumpeters—in short, the idle, the dissolute, and the profane in every conceivable character; and all at such times plying their different vocations and making the scene hideous with their uproar. It was, in fact, one of the very strongholds of Satan; and what more natural than that the ardent Whitefield should long to storm it with one of his raking broadsides? With him to desire was to act.

Accordingly, one day all London rung with the announcement that the Rev. George Whitefield was to preach the day following, Sunday, at Moorfields Common. Such an announcement, new and singular as it was, would of itself have been sufficient to attract

an unusual crowd; but when added to this was the well-known reputation of the preacher, it is no wonder that on descending from his coach at the time appointed his eye rested upon such an audience as he had seen but once or twice before. Many of his friends met him and tried to dissuade him from preaching in such a rabble, informing him that they had heard it frequently asserted that if he dared do such a thing he should never come out alive. He was firm, however, and started in between two of his friends, who declared that they intended to remain with him through every thing. But the pressure of the crowd was so great they were soon parted from him, and, after making vigorous efforts to regain his side, were finally forced back and compelled to leave him at the mercy of the rabble. Cool and collected, Whitefield held his place in their midst—his clear eyes boldly scanning the sea of stormy faces on every side. But, despite the threats, there was no movement to do him harm. Instead, they formed a sort of lane for him, and pressed him onward to a table that had been placed near the center of the field. Just as he was on the point of mounting this, it was broken in pieces by the crowd that surged about him, he himself being pushed backward toward a wall that divided upper and lower Moorfields. He took advantage of this, and, ascending the wall, soon had the noisy multitudes in an order “as decorous as in a church.” His melting tones of eloquence drew tears and groans from some of the most hardened of those present. He was often interrupted

by the piercing cries of those awakened to the realization of their lost condition. His thrilling voice could be heard for nearly a mile.

Having gained the field, he held it and continued preaching, as he himself tells us, until his clothes were dripping with perspiration. And this was on a cold winter's day, in January, 1739!

Whitefield came to Moorfields Common again and again. Sometimes his audience was estimated to number thirty-five or forty thousand. Often their singing could be heard for two miles. But others besides the rabble flocked to hear, many of the wealthiest people of London coming out in their carriages or on horseback. Whitefield took advantage of such occasions to raise collections for various charities, chief among which was his orphan-house in Georgia. His carriage was often so overloaded with the coin that was poured into it that it was difficult for him to find a sitting-place within. On a memorable occasion he was given by the common people alone twenty pounds—about one hundred dollars in our money—in half-pennies. They formed a load impossible for one man to bear away.

In March, 1741, Whitefield preached at Moorfields for the first time on a week-day, on Good Friday. He had a more quiet audience than that to which he had been used to preach on Sundays; but it was none the less attentive, nor did he preach with any less vim and fire. It was this occasion that led some kindly disposed persons who noted the inconvenience to which both audience and preacher were put, as

well as their exposure—for the day was cold and rainy—to procure the loan of a piece of ground on which they erected a temporary shed. In time this building was extended so as to shelter the largest audiences. Whitefield gave to this rude structure the name of “The Tabernacle.” Subsequently it made way for a more pretentious building of brick, which retained the old name. This latter building, which was capable of seating *four thousand people*, was often crowded to suffocation. It was the scene of many of Whitefield’s greatest triumphs. Here the Wesleys also preached after the reconciliation with Whitefield; and here, at the close of a service, occurred the memorable scene in which twelve hundred took the Lord’s Supper from the hands of Wesley and Whitefield. In time thousands came to bless the day the Tabernacle was erected.

But the greatest triumph of Whitefield at Moorfields was at Whitsuntide, when he stood contending with “the very powers of hell” concentrated against him. It has been pronounced such a day as has not been known in “all the Christian centuries.” The day had been advertised as one of general sport. Many new attractions were on the bills: a celebrated wrestler, engaged specially for the occasion; a tight-rope dancer, to air her accomplishments and graces for the first time before a London audience; and so on through the numerous specifications. Rising at day-break, so as to be fresh for the battle, Whitefield reached the grounds at six o’clock. At that early hour not less than ten thousand people were gath-

ered, waiting for the sports to begin. Selecting a prominent stand, Whitefield boldly erected a field-pulpit and began to attract the attention of the surging multitude by singing. "I was determined," he says, "to gain the start of the devil," and surely he did, for none of the sports had yet begun. The song finished, he commenced to preach. In a little while it was as he had hoped—he had the whole multitude around him hanging on his words. At noon, after having allowed himself but little time for rest and refreshment, he returned to the battle. By this time fully thirty thousand people had assembled on the field. "It was," he says, "in full possession of Beelzebub." The noise of their mingled voices sounded as the roar of the angry sea. The showmen and performers were either stalking about in their costumes, making noisy sounds on various instruments to attract the crowd and advertise their business, or else were "furiously plying" their different vocations.

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" was the text chosen by Whitefield, and most masterfully did he handle it. Never did soldier enter into the battle-charge with more chivalric daring. To-day or never must the stronghold be stormed, and to its center! Clearly and boldly he told them of their condition through sin, and of their final damnation if they did not turn from their evil way. Furiously the battle waged. It was a serious thing to stand before those people and tell them of their sins, to denounce the shameful course they were pursuing; but Whitefield

had the courage to do it, even though death might follow at any moment. "Then they threw stones, dirt, rotten eggs, and dead cats at me," says he; but undismayed he kept on, his full broadsides of raining shot making the dry bones of sin rattle with ghastly significance. "My soul was among lions," he says again; and truly it was. Most gladly would they have devoured him, but the spirit of the great Master in whose cause he battled upheld him, and he remained unharmed till the lions were "turned into lambs."

At six o'clock in the evening he was again in his place, freshly resolved to push the fight until Satan's ensigns should lie trampled in the dust. Never did more heroic resolve move a human heart! never did knight go forth to the fray more grandly equipped! Strong in the might of God, he feared not the onset of the most desperate foe. "I came," he says, "and I saw—but what? Thousands upon thousands more than before." Ah, but Satan was indeed present in hot wrath! "The very fires of hell" seemed to surge around him. His ringing voice disturbed a harlequin performing near. He leaped down and rushed toward Whitefield with fists clinched threateningly, but was forced back by the crowd. Then another comic performer, who with many others had been loud in complaint that "this man was ruining their business," got upon the shoulders of another man, and forcing a passage toward Whitefield endeavored to strike him upon the head with a long, heavy whip; but he was so carried away with anger that he missed

his calculation and tumbled headlong into the crowd from the force of his own exertion.

The mob now began to throw all kinds of missiles—stones, dirt, dead rats, rotten eggs, bones, and even glass bottles. But few of these struck Whitefield, and only such as did no harm. Oftener they struck and hurt others in the crowd, especially those behind him. Seeing this, they determined to engage the services of a recruiting sergeant and his file of men who chanced to be upon the ground. Instructions were given the sergeant to march back and forth in front of Whitefield with drum and fife, each instrument making as much noise as possible. As the sergeant, his men, and the “attendant train of stragglers” neared his pulpit-stand, Whitefield shrewdly cried, “Make way for the king’s officer!” At these words the crowd at once pressed apart, leaving a lane in their midst through which marched the sergeant and his train “with his little pomp and circumstance.” As they moved on the ranks closed behind them, so that in a little while they were entirely out of hearing, while in front of Whitefield was again an unbroken audience.

Disappointed in their aims, that portion of the crowd who were determined to put the preacher down at all hazards now assembled on the margin of the fields, and “roaring like wild beasts” formed a solid and grim-visaged column. Their object was to sweep through the crowd, catch up the preacher and bear him away with them. They pressed into service again the sergeant with his great drum, while in their

midst was a long pole borne aloft as a standard. With the loud beating of the drum and wild shouts on they came. But they had not advanced far when they began to quarrel among themselves—then came blows, and finally a regular *mêlée*. The pole was dropped, the crowd scattered, each man seeking to save himself by getting out of the way. Among the first to desert its post, with little order in going, was the imposing head of the column, with the sergeant and the big drum. Some even went over to “the besieged party,” and stood about Whitefield listening to his words.

Directly there arose a tumult like the “sound of many waters.” It was the lost ones, aroused to a sense of their guilt and weeping over their sins, or calling aloud to God in their agony. The sounds swelled until they drowned even Whitefield’s clarion voice. Then he began to sing until “the host was hushed to hear.” So he continued, still holding his ground, “now preaching, now praying, and now singing, until night came upon the field.” He then went to the Tabernacle, where “the voice of rejoicing and praise was lifted up for the victory of the day.” And it was such a victory as to make Satan and his hosts tremble with dismay; for the “vice and misery of London,” the very dregs of those “born to crime,” were bravely faced in their wildest mood and in the midst of their most abandoned carousing, and shaken with a firm hand until they stood out even before their own eyes the wretched, lost creatures they were.

As one proof of the glorious work accomplished

that day, Whitefield received no less than *a thousand notes* from those convicted of sin, entreating his prayers and beseeching to know what further to do to be saved. Of these, three hundred were taken into his Society at one time. Assuredly such a day with such an ending sent a glad halleluiah all along the line of the faithful.

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THE MAD METHODIST.

AMONG the earlier converts to Whitefield's preaching was a young man named Joseph Periam. His first conviction had come through reading a sermon of the great evangelist on "Regeneration." It so startled the young man that he prayed long and fervently at all hours and in all sorts of places; he besought God with loud cries to have mercy upon him; he fasted days at a time, till his family, believing that he had gone deranged, had him put in the Bedlam mad-house. Here he received the name of "The Mad Methodist," and was treated accordingly. The keepers threw him down and forced a key into his mouth, while they "drenched him with medicine." Again, they would fasten him down upon his cot so that he could not move hand nor foot. Finally they placed him in a cold, damp room where there was no floor save the ground, and no windows. In short, they were fast forcing him to his death when Periam managed to get a letter to Whitefield, and he at once came to the rescue. A few moments in Periam's presence convinced him that the young man was no

more mad than he was himself—only suffering from a tortured state of mind brought on through conviction of sin.

Taking with him one of his friends—a Mr. Seward—Whitefield went before the committee of the hospital to explain the case and to petition for the young man's release. The scene is described as both exasperating and ridiculous. Among other things, Seward so astounded the committee by quoting Scripture that they declared him as mad as Periam, and wanted to confine him also in the asylum. The result of this interview was that the committee frankly told the doctors of the hospital that Whitefield and all his followers were but a lot of madmen. However, it was at length arranged that if Whitefield would take Periam out of England he would be released. This arrangement was made, and Periam went with Whitefield to the new colony of Georgia, where he became an exemplary and useful man, a sincere Christian, and an honored officer of Mr. Whitefield's orphan-home. At his death he left two sons, who were likewise highly respected, and who became teachers in the institution.

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THE SEPARATION OF WHITEFIELD AND WESLEY.

IN 1741 occurred that ever-to-be-regretted scene when Whitefield and Wesley, like Paul and Barnabas of old, "parted asunder." It was while on a visit to America, especially during his stay in New England, that Whitefield began to lean toward the more rigid doctrines of Calvinism in which

a limited atonement is made a fundamental dogma of faith. Letters frequently passed between the two, even while Whitefield was in America, but the open rupture did not come until March, 1741, when the two met in London—Whitefield firmly rooted in the belief that the plan of God's atonement was limited, and only an elect few were to share in his salvation; and Wesley burning with the faith that divine grace was open to *all* through repentance, even to the vilest sinner. On many other matters "the great orator" and the "great organizer" were of one mind and heart, but alas! upon this, the most vital question of all, they were as widely apart as the poles. "Faith, pardon, renewal, holiness, and the witness of the Spirit"—these things they both believed and earnestly proclaimed from their pulpits.

The acceptance of this doctrine of "sovereign grace" had come to Whitefield more as an instinct than any thing else; he had never stopped to reason it out, to weigh the whys and wherefores of God's saving only a part of his children and leaving the rest to be damned. If he had done so, how different might have been the result! Influenced by scenes which he daily witnessed, he jumped at conclusions, as so many have done before him, and as many will yet do while the world stands. He declared that he saw multitudes unsaved who were "by nature as good as himself." He did not reflect that this was because they either did not care to be saved or did not make the proper effort. He constantly asked himself,

“Why should I have salvation unless by the special grace of election?” And what made the joy, the hope within him if not the knowledge that he would in the end come off conqueror through final perseverance?

Of man’s free-will, of his power either to accept or reject this “pearl of great price,” Whitefield made stout denial. It left too much power in the hands of the creature, he argued, and tended to make the Creator depart from the high official function invested in him through the divine majesty of the Godhead, in that he became the one to accept and not to reject.

It was not so much predestination that Whitefield held as “election by grace”—that is, that even before the foundation of the world “God had chosen a certain number of his creatures and set them apart as elected unto him, to be justified, sanctified, and finally brought into his kingdom through saving grace.”

With Wesley it was different. He did not depend upon either instinct or impression, but upon the clear conviction obtained through a calm and logical reasoning. In short, he was a logician, which Whitefield, alas! with all his deep learning and magic eloquence, was not. And this doctrine of particular redemption Wesley had held under the microscopic glasses of patient research and deep study. To him it seemed that this principle of a limited atonement, this denying of salvation to some and bestowing it as a free gift upon others, was totally at variance with

the compassionate love of Him who had come into the world that "*whosoever* believed in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." All teaching of the New Testament was in direct opposition to a doctrine so contracted, so unjust, so plainly in conflict with a divine nature. "Come unto me, *all* ye that labor and are heavy-laden," this gracious, *universal* Saviour had said, "and I will give you rest." Again, the Word of God declared: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us *all*, how shall he not with him also *freely* give us all things?"

"The grace or love of God," held Wesley, "whence cometh our salvation, is *free in all*, and *free for all*"—yes, free through him who had given his Son *to die for all*, and with him "*freely* given all things." Therefore, if any man was not saved, it was his own fault, since God had made him *free* to choose as he pleased. Truly it was a *universal* call:

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast,
Let every soul be Jesus' guest:
You need not one be left behind,
For God hath bidden *all mankind!*

That was a sad meeting between Wesley and Whitefield which took place on the latter's return to England, for Whitefield was far from being in an amiable mood. He went to the undue extent of telling Mr. Wesley, who had come simply to make a friendly call upon him, that as they now preached two widely different doctrines he could no longer join with him or even give him the right-hand of fellowship. His ardent temperament led him for a time to consider

the breach between himself and Mr. Wesley as irreparable. He could not see how the views which he honestly held in regard to the extent of the atonement could be reconciled with the extreme Arminianism of the Wesleys, and could therefore anticipate nothing less than permanent alienation. It is to be regretted that these two men of God should have suffered even this temporary estrangement, and that it should have affected for a time the Methodist societies in England and Wales. It is an instance of human infirmity, that is all.

But the Paul and Barnabas of early Methodism were not long to remain "parted asunder." Harmonizers were at work to restore that brotherly feeling which had once been so strong a tie between them. Prominent among these was the gentle and gracious Countess of Huntingdon. A reconciliation was finally effected—Whitefield and Wesley began to exchange pulpits despite their differences of faith, "and all things fell out for the furtherance of the gospel." And while each retained his opinions to the last, still they seemed to have agreed never again to disagree. That this unity was complete, that the mantle of Christian brotherhood from that time forth wrapped them warmly in its folds, was eloquently evidenced in that Whitefield when dying left to his "dear and honored friends and disinterested fellow-laborers," the Revs. John and Charles Wesley, a mourning-ring in token of an "indissoluble union with them in heart and Christian affection." An equally eloquent fact is that while the trustees of the

Tabernacle were arranging for Whitefield's funeral, the chief executor came forward and stated that he had many times said to Whitefield: "If you should die abroad, whom shall we get to preach your funeral sermon? Must it be your old friend, the Rev. John Wesley?" And his invariable answer was, "He is the man." Assuredly, of all others he *was* the man!

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

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WESLEY PREACHING FROM HIS FATHER'S TOMB.

IN June of the year 1742 John Wesley made a visit to his old home at Epworth. How many sad changes had taken place since he last saw it! His father and mother were both dead and the family widely scattered. But there were other things to add to his sorrow and dejection. He felt that he could not ask any of his former friends to shelter him, since he was now an outcast from his Church and a persecuted itinerant of the new faith he had so fearlessly adopted. He therefore went to a public inn; but here he was recognized by an old family servant, when a most affecting scene took place.

Wesley had come to preach to his old friends and neighbors, with many of whom he had played in childhood. For some time past he had strongly felt this call, and he longed to sow at least a few seeds of the faith in the home of his youth. He had little

hope that the curate would grant his petition to be allowed the use of the church. He had grown so used to rebuffs and refusals that he almost knew the request would be denied; still he bravely determined to press it. It was as he expected—he was curtly denied by the curate, Mr. Romley. Even his humble request to be merely allowed to assist at the services was met with the same rude rejection. But the bold and zealous preacher determined that the people should hear him, if not in the church then without its doors. It was no new thing for him to preach in the open air, as we well know; indeed, by this time he was quite a veteran in field-preaching.

The weather was fine, and the shelter of the trees plentiful. A happy idea struck Wesley: he would preach in the church-yard, and from his father's tomb—from the tomb of him who for nearly forty years had been the loved and honored rector of the very church from which his son had now been so unjustly and shamefully barred. And that my young readers may more fully understand the character of the man who had turned the good and pious John Wesley from the altars of his father, I must tell you that it has come down to us from unquestionable authority that this curate was a "drunken fellow;" and at the very time Mr. Wesley went to him with the request for the church he was in a state of "bestly intoxication." * O what a shame and disgrace it all was! Yet, disregarding the treatment he had received, Wesley attended the church services the next

* Dr. Southey, in his "Life of the Rev. John Wesley."

morning, and in great patience and with the utmost respect sat and heard the prayers read and the sermon delivered by the very man he had seen the evening before so shamefully drunk. Surely his heart was filled with the love of God and with the charity which suffereth long and is kind!

After the sermon in the church, the people on coming out were surprised to hear from a person standing in the church-yard that the Rev. John Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, would hold services in the church-yard that evening at six o'clock. That this announcement was gladly received by the majority of the congregation was amply shown when Mr. Wesley came at the time appointed and found such an assembly as he modestly declared he did not believe Epworth had ever seen before. Standing near the east end of the church upon his father's tomb, his first words to the listening multitude startled them as a trumpet-blast: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost!"

The next evening he stood again upon the same spot and cried aloud to a congregation described as most "earnestly attentive," "By grace ye are saved through faith!" Then followed a forcible and sweeping sermon upon the free agency of man, his privilege to accept or reject the pardon of his sins, and God's willingness to forgive *all* who come unto him truly penitent and believing. Many who heard him were astounded. This came so directly in conflict with the long-established doctrine of "divine grace,"

and of the elect few saved through that grace—it hit so hard a blow at the old form of *mouth-praise* devoid of any real *heart-worship*—that it is no wonder the hearers were amazed.

On Friday evening, again standing upon his father's tomb, Mr. Wesley preached on Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones—a subject that had a peculiarly terrifying import in connection with the surroundings amidst which it was preached. The effect was electrical. As with one voice the people began to cry out for mercy and to prostrate themselves upon the ground. Afterward, as in his most persuasive tones he began to entreat them to flee from the wrath to come and accept a present Saviour, “on every side, as with one accord,” the people lifted up their voices and wept. It was in truth a most pathetic and heart-touching scene.

The following Saturday evening, once more standing above the sacred dust of his father, he preached a sermon on “the righteousness of the law and that of faith.” Such was the effect of this sermon that when he had been speaking but a few minutes several persons dropped to the ground as if dead, while sinners groaned in the agony of their souls so as almost to drown his voice. He stopped his sermon and began fervently to pray for them. Many felt the burden roll away, and sprung up rejoicing in a precious Saviour so newly found.

As he moved among the penitents, exhorting and praying, Mr. Wesley chanced to notice a man whom he recalled as having been previously pointed out to

him as one who professed to be "of no religion at all." Indeed, he seemed to take especial delight in boasting that he had not attended public worship of any kind for upward of thirty years. When Wesley's eye fell upon him he was standing motionless as a statue. He approached him and asked: "Sir, are you a sinner?" At once, and in a voice broken by emotion, he replied, "Sinner enough;" but, singular to relate, this emotion did not in the least extend to his face, which remained as stony as ever, while he continued staring upward as one transfixed. He stood thus until a few moments later, when his wife and servants, who were themselves all bathed in tears, came to put him into his carriage and take him home. But this was not to be the last heard of the religious conviction of one who had honestly confessed himself "sinner enough." The seed had, as Mr. Wesley hoped, fallen upon rich ground, and were to bear their fruit a hundred-fold. Ten years later Mr. Wesley again met this man whose strange state in the Epworth church-yard had made so deep and lasting an impression upon him, and was rejoiced to find him still "strong in faith, though weak in body." For many years he had been "rejoicing in God" without a doubt or a fear to cloud the happiness of his soul, and he was now serenely awaiting the welcome hour when he should depart and be with Christ.

But this was not the only reward of Mr. Wesley's labors in the Epworth church-yard. Wide-spread and most gracious were the results of that week of

preaching, and many the converts won to the new doctrine of "free grace" and "salvation through faith."

What a broad and precious belief it was! How gladly now might the poor sinner cry from the depths of his penitent heart:

Let the world their virtue boast,
Their works of righteousness;
I, a wretch undone and lost,
Am freely saved by grace!

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THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE AND THE METHODISTS.

WHILE John Wesley was preaching at Epworth the news reached him that in a neighboring town "a whole wagon-load of poor Methodists" had been taken up and carried before a justice of the peace on some flimsily invented pretext. Thinking that by his presence he might do his poor persecuted brethren some good, Wesley determined to ride over to the town. Accordingly, securing a horse, he set out on the Wednesday following the Sunday he had first preached in the Epworth church-yard. On reaching the room where the courts were held, he found the Methodists already undergoing their trial. The justice—who was rather a consequential-looking personage, but with a round, good-humored face quite out of keeping with the stern requirements of his office—was just asking what they had done. At first no one had any thing to say, but finally a voice was heard asserting: "Why, they pretend to be better

than any other people; and besides, they pray from morning till night." "But," said the justice, "have they done nothing else?" Then suddenly spoke up an old man, pushing his way nearer the seat of justice: "Yes, sir, an't please your worship, they have, *converted* my wife. Till she went among them she had such a tongue, and now she is as quiet as a lamb!" "Ha, ha, ha! and is that true?" questioned the justice, throwing himself back in the chair and laughing uproariously. "Well then, my verdict is, carry them back, carry them back, I say, and let them convert all the scolds in town!"

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THE PREACHING STONE-MASON.

UNDER the first sermon Wesley preached at Moorfields Common, as has been stated, John Nelson, a Yorkshire mason, had been powerfully converted. Previous to that hour when the calm, searching eyes of Wesley, fastening themselves as though purposely upon the mason's face, made his heart beat as "the pendulum of a clock," John Nelson had been in a most deplorable state. Everywhere he had sought relief from the fever that burned at his heart. He tells us that God had followed him with conviction ever since his tenth year. Although he had tried to lead an upright, moral life, still he knew this was far from being all a man had to do to win acceptance with God. Since arriving at man's estate he had diligently sought in every direction for that "bread of life" which alone could fill the hungry soul. He

went from church to church seeking help and asking questions until both priests and people thought him crazy. No one seemed to know just what was the remedy he sought. If the priests knew—and it is likely they did—they refrained from telling him, lest the acknowledgment should prove too great a reproach to their own loose and careless lives.

At Moorfields Common he had heard Whitefield, and passed days thereafter in the most signal torture, sleeping little at night, and then only to fall into terrible dreams from which he awoke “dripping with sweat and shivering with terror.” Then Wesley came to Moorfields. From the moment he ascended the platform, stroked back his hair, and fixed his piercing eyes, seemingly through intent, upon the mason’s face, Nelson felt that here indeed was a man who could draw the very secrets from his breast. Trembling like a leaf and dripping with cold perspiration, Nelson nevertheless stood his ground firmly through a discourse “every word of which seemed aimed directly at him.” But in the end the reward came: he was shown the remedy for his wretchedness—the remedy he had so long and so vainly sought. And how simple it was after all! By *faith* he was to be saved *through the blood of Christ*—the blood which could wash away the vilest stain.

From the moment that he felt God’s peace flowing as a river through his heart, Nelson resolved that henceforth the greater part of his life should be spent in telling others of this Saviour he had found. This was not a simple resolve, but the full determi-

nation of a man who threw into it all the earnestness of a fervid temperament. John Nelson was one of the men who never did things by halves. He gave himself with all the force of his character to the work he had planned. He fasted; he read the Scriptures, committing whole passages to memory, so as to be able to use them on future occasions; he passed whole hours upon his knees in prayer, and never failed to exhort his friends and fellow-workmen whenever and wherever he could. The more intimate of his acquaintances now grew really distressed concerning him. They thought him ruined, that he was carrying his religious fervor entirely too far, that his business would suffer, and his family starve. They began to deplore the day that ever he had seen Wesley, and predicted that that ranting Methodist would yet be "the ruin of him." "I thank God," returned Nelson, "that ever Wesley was born. I have learned from him that my chief business in this world is to get well out of it."

With such feelings did some of Nelson's friends now come to regard him that they began to fight shy of his company for fear of some evil coming to themselves. The family with whom Nelson had been boarding, dreading the attention that would be drawn to their premises through "so much praying and fuss as he made about religion," now gave him notice to leave. But when he went to pay them the amount he owed them and take his departure, there was that in his face and manner which so forcibly struck them that their hearts failed them as to the justness of their

reason for desiring him to go. They took a second thought. The Spirit strove earnestly with them. "What if John is right, after all, and we wrong?" they asked themselves. Finally, unable to restrain herself, the woman said: "John Nelson, if God has done for you any thing more than for us, show us how we also may find the same mercy." We may well believe that his ears were not deaf to such an appeal. Upon his knees, at the very threshold of the door whence they had sought to turn him out, he feelingly pleaded with God in their behalf. Soon he was leading them to hear Wesley. One of them was made partaker of the same grace which had filled his own heart with such peace and zeal, while he often expressed "the hope of meeting both in heaven."

When Nelson was converted under Wesley's preaching he had been working on one of the royal buildings. One Sabbath, soon after the memorable day at Moorfields, his employer requested him to work, declaring that "the king's business required haste." Nelson firmly replied that he would not work on the Sabbath for any man in England, even if he *were* the king, except to quench fire, or to do something that required as instant help. "Then thou shalt lose thy place," declared his employer angrily. "I would rather starve than offend God," returned Nelson. "What hast thou done that thou makest such an ado about religion?" demanded his employer testily. "I always took thee for an honest man, and could trust thee with five hundred pounds." "So you might," returned Nelson sturdily, "and not have lost one

penny by me." "But I have a worse opinion of you now than ever," resumed his employer. "Master," quickly returned Nelson, "I have the odds of you there, for I have a much worse opinion of myself than you can have." But he did not lose his place; neither was he again called upon to work on the Sabbath.

Nelson now wrote to his wife and to his kindred in Birstal, telling them of the great change that had come to him, and earnestly urging upon them the importance of seeking this great blessing for themselves. So far did his zeal carry him that he fasted once a day that he might give the price of his dinner to the poor. He even hired one of his fellow-workmen to go and hear Wesley, believing that his money could not be spent upon a better mission. The end proved him right in his judgment, for this deed, as questionable as it may appear in some lights, was the means of bringing both the man and his wife to Christ. Nelson at last went in person to Birstal. Face to face with his family, how much more earnestly he could plead with them than through the cold medium of pen and paper! Among his first converts were an aunt, his two brothers, and two cousins. What an effort these conversions cost him we may judge when it is known that at first they believed him "deluded of the devil," and it was long ere he could make any headway over this prejudice. But God graciously blessed his efforts. The circle began to widen, as that on the bosom of a stream into which a stone has been cast. At length his house would

not hold the people who came to hear him preach. Then he stood in the door and addressed the multitudes without. Conversions of the most remarkable character took place—those of men long hardened in their sins, and of avowed blasphemers. Soon the ale-houses were deserted; the loafers left the streets—they congregated about Nelson's house and listened to his words, many going forth again with renewed life. In short, the drunkards became sober, the Sabbath was kept, and the aspect of the whole place was so changed that no one would have recognized it for the old Birstal.

Hearing of Nelson's work, Wesley came to help him. Great was his surprise to find not only a preacher but a society awaiting him! In regard to the great change that had taken place in town and people Wesley pronounced it one of the most remarkable that he had ever seen. "Such a change," he concluded, "did God work by the artless testimony of one man!" But this was not all. His voice, sounding at first as that which crieth in a wilderness, but little heeded, now went forth into Leeds, Wakefield, Halifax, and all Yorkshire. Of Methodism in Yorkshire he was undoubtedly the founder, and to this day all that region bears the glowing imprint of his faith and zeal.

Nelson now labored at his trade of hewing stone by day, and at night he went out to preach. Other places besides Yorkshire were visited and blessed by his efforts. But now the country was thrown into great commotion through threatened invasions from

France and Spain. The Scotch Pretender, too, had recently made several movements that excited alarm. All sorts of vile slanders against the Methodists were put in circulation. They were traitors; their leader had even been seen in company with the Pretender in France. Again, he was an agent of Spain, and received large remittances from that country for valuable information which he in secret furnished the heads of the government. Following upon the circulation of these slanders came persecutions of the direst sort. Often these outrages, with more shame be it said, were effected through those wearing the uniform of the king's soldiers.

At Nottingham, where John Nelson went to preach, a sergeant of the army said to him with tears flowing down his cheeks: "Sir, in the presence of God and all this people, I beg your pardon; for I came on purpose to mob you, but when I could get no one to assist me I stood to hear you, and am convinced of the deplorable state of my soul; I believe you are a servant of the living God." These words spoken, he kissed Nelson upon the cheek, and went away weeping as one in whom there was no hope.

At Grimsby, the parish clergyman, a low and drunken fellow, to whose debauched way of living Nelson's pure and honest life was a perpetual reproach, hired a drummer and fifer to drown the words of his preaching. To two or three rowdies he also supplied liquor, with the understanding that they were to raise a mob to set upon the house where Nelson lodged and entirely destroy it. Before Nelson's sermon was half

over the drummer was so powerfully convicted that he fell upon his knees crying for mercy, while the fifer threw his fife away and fled from the scene. The mob was raised, however, and marched to Nelson's lodging. They found him preaching to a small congregation that had gathered within. Although their clerical leader was present and urging them to pull down the house, the mob would do naught so long as Nelson's voice could be heard in exhortation; but when that ceased they only broke the windows and ran away.

At his own home, Birstal, another clergyman—a man as low and unprincipled as the other—swore out a charge of vagrancy against him and had him arrested, hoping to get him sent into the army. Under the law at that time men who could give no proof of their legitimate business were apprehended and forced to serve in the army. One of Nelson's townsmen offered five hundred pounds to have him released, but it did no good. Notwithstanding his own efforts and those of his friends, he was marched off to Halifax, where this same Birstal vicar sat upon the bench as one of the commission that had the disposal of his case. Many of Nelson's friends and neighbors followed to bear witness to his honest and industrious habits, but the wily vicar so managed that they were not heard. Fixing his eyes fearlessly upon his accuser, Nelson said to him: "I am as able to get my living by my hands as any other man in England, and you know it." After all, he was ordered to jail at Bradford. He said to his weeping friends on part-

ing with them: "Fear not; God hath his way in the whirlwind, and he will plead my cause; only pray for me that my faith fail not."

At Bradford he was placed in a foul dungeon under a slaughter-house. It flowed with blood and filth, and smelt, he tells us, "like a pig-sty; but my soul," he adds, "was so filled with the love of God it was a paradise to me." There was nothing to sit on, and nothing to sleep on save a bed of foul straw; but even at sight of this his spirit did not quail. Impressed by his courageous demeanor, a poor soldier offered to become responsible for him, and another, a bitter opposer of Methodism, proposed to get security for him, just so he might be allowed to sleep in a bed. The people handed him food and water and candles through a hole in the door, and stood without singing hymns with him until morning. Their charities Nelson generously shared with a miserable fellow - prisoner, who would otherwise have starved.

In the morning his wife came. Her first words showed how worthy she was of him: "Fear not," she said, speaking to him through the hole in the door, "the cause is God's for which you are here, and he will plead it himself. He that feeds the young ravens will be mindful of me and the children. He will give you strength; he will perfect what is lacking in us and bring you to his rest." Her brave husband blessed her for these words, and added: "I cannot fear; nay, I cannot fear either man or devil so long as I find the love of God as I now do."

The next day he was carried to Leeds. He says he thought of the "Pilgrim's Progress," for as soon as he was in jail hundreds of people crowded the streets and gazed at him through the iron gate. Many were on the point of fighting for him, even some of those who opposed the Methodists. A stranger in the place offered to bail him out, but was refused. That night a hundred persons met with him in the jail, and joined with him in worship.

A few days afterward he was marched off to York. Here so great was the hostility against the Methodists that at sight of him it was as though "hell from beneath had been moved to meet him." The streets and windows were filled with people who shouted at him and made threatening gestures as though he had been the vilest traitor in the kingdom. "But," he tells us, "the Lord made my brow like brass, so that I could look upon them as grasshoppers, and pass through the city as though there had been none in it save God and me."

He was again thrown into prison. He passed his time in reproving the officers who swore, and in exhorting all to a change of life. He was soon ordered to uniform himself and appear with the soldiers on parade. To the corporal who was sent to gird him in his military trappings he talked in such a way that the man shook as though he had the palsy. When the musket was handed him, he declared that he would bear arms "as a cross, but that he would not fight; that it was against his conscience, and that he would not harm his conscience for any man on

earth." He continually reproved and exhorted his companions in the ranks. Soon he had quite a company about him desiring to hear him talk. He preached regular sermons to them. In the end they went away declaring: "This is the doctrine that ought to be preached, let men say what they will against it." Before long, in his uniform of the king's army, he was preaching regularly in the quarters of the regiment, on the streets, in the fields, and in various public places; nor could any proceeding on the part of his officers stop him.

Once a "stripling ensign," who took pleasure in tormenting him, had him committed to prison for preaching. For the first time since his conversion the old carnal nature rose up fiercely within John Nelson. "It caused a sore temptation to arise in me," he confesses, "to think that a wicked, ignorant man should torment me, and I able to tie his head and heels together. I found an old man's bone in me; but the Lord lifted up a standard, when anger was coming on like a flood, else I should have wrung his neck to the ground and set my foot upon him."

At length, after marching about with his regiment for three months, and suffering all kinds of indignities, Nelson was released through the influence of the Countess of Huntingdon. He left this soldier's life, so repugnant to his peaceful nature, to go forth willingly, joyously in the service of a greater King.

CHARLES WESLEY AND THE RIOTERS.

LIKE his brother John and Whitefield, Charles Wesley was often called to give the "test of his heroic temper." Sensitive in body, dreamy in temperament, and with the soul of a poet, he nevertheless possessed the heart of a hero. His lofty sense of duty and his unremitting devotion to his Master's cause were preëminent over all other sentiments. In the midst of peril he stood invincible, his poet soul unshaken, his vivid imagination bursting into the flame of glorious, heroic emotion. Such occasions gave him all the more inspiration for his grand and glowing hymns. Coming from Walsall to Sheffield, where "hell from beneath was moved to oppose him," he might well have sung with Winkler:

Yea, let men rage, since thou wilt spread
Thy shad'wing wings around my head:
Since in all pain thy tender love
Will still my sure refreshment prove.

Many times the poet-preacher stood in imminent peril of his life. Almost from the time of his starting out to preach mobs had assailed him with flying missiles of every description, or "with tongues set on fire of hell," as they had Whitefield and his brother John. He was frequently hooted at and hissed by the miserable rabble, each bent upon drowning his voice. He was covered with mud, and had his clothes torn nearly from him; he was often bruised, and sometimes beaten; the windows of the houses in which he lodged were broken by the mob on the outside. But amidst it all he remained unshaken; and

giving renewed thanks to God for each deliverance, he moved steadily and heroically on.

At Walsall a military officer led the mob against him, sword in hand and breathing out curses at every step. A shower of stones began, hitting the desk behind which he stood and injuring many in the audience. Fearing for the people more than he did for himself, and not wishing to see the innocent hurt, Charles Wesley now determined to go out and stand face to face with the assaulting foe. He courageously made his way until he stood directly in front of the furious officer with the "whole army of aliens at his back." Fixing his eyes piercingly upon him, and addressing him a few words, he handed him one of his brother John's tracts, headed "Advice to a Soldier." The officer cursed and raved, and threw the tract at his feet. Some one else stooped to pick it up. Wesley stood immovable for a few moments, then forced his way back toward the door of the building. Here, while the stones continued to fly, many of them hitting him in the face, he prayed for the king, and resumed the sermon he had begun in the house. The sermon finished, he besought God for sinners, whom he designated as "servants of the devil." This seemed to arouse the officer to renewed fury. He sprung forward, passed through the crowd, and placing the point of his sword at Wesley's breast swore that he should die for what he termed ridicule of the king and insults to his officers. Wesley calmly fixed his eyes upon him, and opening the folds of his vest, the better to receive the blow, quietly said: "Strike,

if you desire. I fear God and honor the king." Before this sublime courage the wanton heart of the officer quailed. He returned his sword to its scabbard, and slunk away through the crowd. But the worst was not yet over. As Charles retired to the house of a friend, the mob, greatly increased in numbers, began to attack it. All the mobs he had ever seen, he declared, "were as lambs to these." Windows were smashed in, doors broken down, and streams of water and showers of stones thrown in upon the helpless inmates.

Afterward, when the preacher and his little flock had again repaired to the "preaching-house," the mob fell upon the building, determined to pull it down. They succeeded in breaking off one of the doors and in demolishing a corner of the structure. During this proceeding the worshipers within remained at their devotions, "praying and praising God." All night the rioters continued to rage like wild beasts through the town; but in the midst of it all Charles "calmly slept," his trust firmly staid upon the gracious care of his heavenly Father.

At five o'clock the next morning he was preaching in the damaged chapel. After he left it the mob again besieged it, and this time left not "one stone upon another." Seeking a different lodging-place from that of the night before, he hoped to secure at least a few hours of freedom from the harrowing scenes of the preceding day. But it was not to be. The mob soon found out where he was lodged, and set upon the place with a fury that would have

shamed "all the devils of hell." The house was gutted, and streams of water poured in upon it, not a door or window being left. Wesley afterward entered the dismantled room and lay down to rest, when in five minutes he was peacefully asleep. The last words of his petition that night were, "Father, scatter thou the people that delight in war." The next morning at five o'clock he was up and in the midst of his brethren, comforting them, and speaking words of reassurance and faith. Leaving them with the promise to return to share their woes, endure their trials, and break again to them the bread of life, he went forth to encounter trials, toil, and danger.

Wesley afterward learned that this mob had been stirred up by the clergy of Sheffield, who so denounced the Methodists, even from the pulpits, as to make the people believe that "whosoever killed them were doing God service." Shame, shame on them! and they wearing the holy vestments of a Church that professed to follow Christ and keep his commandments.

Soon after leaving Sheffield, Charles went into Cornwall, at that time one of the roughest mining districts of all England. But as uncongenial as was the soil, the seeds of Methodism had already been planted. The divinely enjoined command of the great leader, that his preachers should "go not only to those who need them, but to those who needed them *most*," had planted the standard of the faith even in Cornwall, where it often seemed as if it must go down before the storms of persecution or be torn

to shreds in the fierce gales of opposition. But the brave soldiers of the cross never faltered as they repeatedly went to the charge.

At St. Ives, in Cornwall, while Charles Wesley was preaching in the chapel a frenzied mob assailed it. They broke out the windows, wrenched off the doors, tore up the seats, and left nothing standing but the stone walls. Wesley stood calmly looking on while his affrighted congregation gathered about him. Their work of destruction finished, the mob next turned upon the preacher with vile epithets, curses, and threats. They swore that he should never preach in that house again, declaring that if he did they would kill him on the spot. Unawed, however, he lifted up his voice and began to preach Christ and his death for sinners. The mob became wild with rage; they stormed and swore more fiercely than ever. They brandished their clubs about his head, yet, strange to say, none of them struck him, though many were aimed directly at him. The congregation did not fare so well. Indeed, some of them were most terribly beaten, one or two even unto death. Women and children were thrown down and roughly trampled upon; but their courage never forsook them—even in the midst of their suffering scarce a cry or groan escaped them. Truly, the strength of the Lord dwelt with them.

While the riot was raging wildly, as had happened on the like occasions before, the mob fell out among themselves, and began to beat each other, swearing horribly. Many were crippled and otherwise seri-

ously hurt. Finally, after breaking a number of heads, among them that of their leader, who was the town-clerk, they left Wesley and his devoted people in full possession of the field.

At Poole, another town in the district, Wesley and his congregation were entirely driven from the church, through the streets, and to the edge of the town, where they were kept several hours surrounded by the hooting mob, who spent the time in alternately cursing them and throwing stones. On this occasion a shameful record is left, a record that stands upon the pages of the register of one of the parish churches—sufficient, it would seem, to have long ago blistered the page upon which it is written. A church-warden led this mob—a man who, it is said, stood well in his church. Getting preacher and people to the outskirts of the town, he left his associates to torment them in every way their evil hearts could devise, and returned to the town ale-house to procure drinks for those who had helped him “drive the Methodists.” Never were wages of sin more shamefully earned, or paid in purer coin of Satan! And there on the parish book of that zealous warden’s church stands to this day the shameful record: *“Expenses at Ann Gartrell’s for driving the Methodists, nine shillings!”* Is it any wonder that the people were wicked, when the very churches not only sanctioned but abetted the wickedness?

As at Sheffield, it was soon proved beyond a doubt that this mob had been instigated and aided by the clergy, who were everywhere doing all they could to

crush out a sect whose simple and devout style of living was so palpable a reproach to their own loose and dissolute ways.

Despite all the persecutions with which he met, Charles Wesley continued to preach throughout the mining region of Cornwall until August, 1743, and with gracious results. He knew that at every step of the way there were toils, trials, perils, and even death; but all around him the people were perishing in their sins, and with a hero's heart and a martyr's faith he determined to know neither rest nor languor until he had borne to them the glad proclamation of life eternal. It was of just such scenes as these that he wrote:

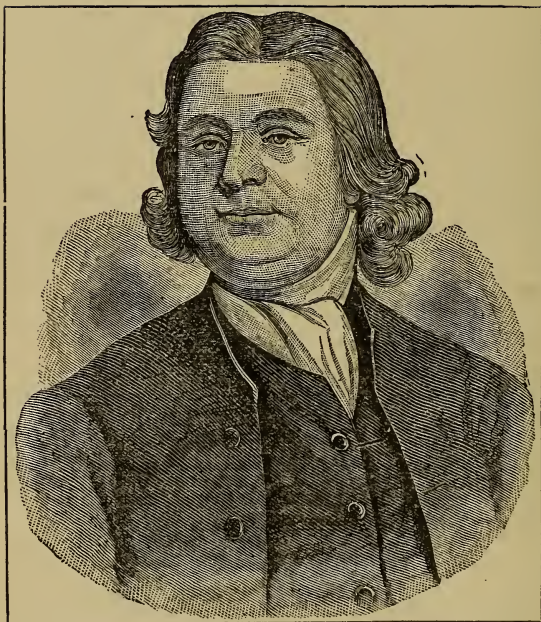
My talents, gifts, and graces, Lord,
Into thy blessèd hands receive;
And let me live to preach thy word,
And let me to thy glory live;
My every sacred moment spend
In publishing the sinners' Friend.

Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart
With boundless charity divine!
So shall I all my strength exert,
And love them with a zeal like thine,
And lead them to thy open side,
The sheep for whom their Shepherd died.

* * *

"ONE WHOLE SIDE LEFT."

SOON after Charles Wesley had been in Cornwall, John Wesley, in company with brave John Nelson, came into the district to see what could be done toward storming it for Christ. They remained for



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three weeks' hard service, and during all that time slept upon the floor. Wesley had his great-coat for a pillow, and faithful John rested his head upon a copy of Burkitt's "Notes on the New Testament." It was hard fare, but they were soldiers enough to endure it.

About three o'clock one morning Wesley, cramped and sore with long lying on the hard boards, stretched himself to turn over. Finding Nelson also awake, he clapped him upon the side, saying with a voice as hearty as though they had been in the most luxurious bed: "Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer; I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but one side!"

But this rough mode of sleeping was not the only hardship. They were often consumed by the pangs of hunger, for seldom were they asked to eat and drink.

Once, as they were returning from preaching at St. Hilary Downs, Mr. Wesley, overcome with hunger, stopped to pick some blackberries. As he conveyed the first handful to his mouth, he said to Nelson with quaint humor: "Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries, for this is the worst country I ever saw for getting a stomach."

What cheerfulness in the midst of sore deprivation! Assuredly this was the man of all others to lead those "peculiar people" whose fiery trials gave them the fortitude to win and the worthiness to wear the crown of martyrdom.

WESLEY AND THE WEDNESBURY MOBS.

BESIDES preaching a great many times in London and Bristol during the year 1743, John Wesley visited several other places and preached as often as he could gather a congregation. While at Bristol on one of these occasions the news reached him that many of the Methodists at Wednesbury, Darlaston, and West Bromwich, in Staffordshire, had been assailed by mobs who not only struck them down while out on the streets, and pelted them with stones and mud, but also broke into their houses, smashing their furniture and cruelly beating the helpless women and children. Mr. Wesley, with his usual courage and loyalty, made all haste to go to the aid of his persecuted people, determined to do what he could to comfort and advise them, and if need be to suffer with them. After reaching Wednesbury and seeing the state of affairs, he made up his mind to face the howling mobs and declare unto them the divine message of love, peace, and good-will to all men. If ever a soil *needed* the seed of the word, it was this passion-torn, Satan-stirred soil of Wednesbury. Accordingly, at noon of the day following his arrival he preached from the horse-block in what was known as the Bull-ring. The crowd surged about him, many uttering threats as to what they would do if he did not desist; but beyond throwing a few stones, sticks, and eggs, no other demonstrations were made.

On the same afternoon, however, as he was sitting in the house of one Francis Ward, writing, the mob laid siege to the house. Falling upon his knees, Wesley

besought God to send the mob away. In half an hour not a man remained. God seemed to have his faithful servant in the very hollow of his hand. After the mob had dispersed, Wesley urged his friends to allow him to depart, fearing that further danger might beset them if they continued to shelter him. They would not listen to his proposition, but entreated him the more to remain.

By five o'clock the mob was back again, and in greater numbers than ever. High above all the other turbulent noises resounded the cries, "Bring out the minister!" "Bring him out, we say!" "*We will* have the minister!" Fearing the consequences to his friends if he remained inactive, Mr. Wesley now attempted to leave the house in order to face the mob and reason with them. But he was at once prevented. Failing in this endeavor, he next instructed one of those with him to go out and take the leader of the mob by the hand and bring him into the house. The man went as requested, and soon returned leading the captain who was cursing horribly and raging like a lion. In a little while after Wesley had spoken a few words to him he became as quiet as a lamb. He then asked Wesley to let him go out and bring in two or three of his most violently enraged companions. Permission was immediately given. When these companions first appeared with him they were "fit to eat the ground with rage," but after being a few moments in Wesley's presence they became as calm as their leader. This reads like a page out of some highly colored romance, but the broad stamp of truth

has been given to it, and to many similar incidents in his early ministry.

Mr. Wesley now disregarded the entreaties of his friends and decided that he would go out among the mob. As soon as he had made his way into the midst of them he stood upon a chair that some one brought him, and, looking out over the sea of angry faces, asked calmly, "What do you want with me?" Some instantly replied, "To knock you on the head!" But the larger number said, "We want you to go with us to the justice." Then answered Wesley as calmly as before, "I will go with you with all my heart," and got down off his chair. But mounting it again in a few moments, he spoke kind words to them, and began to petition God in their behalf. Many were so struck with his manner and his words as to cry out lustily, "The gentleman is an honest gentleman; we will spill our blood for him!" Wesley again asked quietly: "Since you desire me to go to the justice, shall we go to-night or to-morrow morning?" "To-night! to-night!" cried out those who had not yet been touched by his bearing as some others had.

They now pushed him on in front of them and set out for Bentley Hall, two miles away, where Mr. Lane, the justice, resided. They had not gone half the distance when night settled down darkly, and a heavy rain came on, wetting Mr. Wesley to the skin and chilling him through and through.

One or two of the mob ran on ahead to tell the justice they had brought Mr. Wesley to be tried before his worship. They thought it would be quite a

fine feather in their cap to have captured and delivered up to the stern prosecution of the law the leader of the detested Methodists. But Mr. Lane was a sensible man; let us hope that he was also a just man, and that his action on this occasion was prompted alone by right motives. At any rate, it seemed that he could see no good that would come of a prosecution of this kind; so when the men asked him to receive Mr. Wesley for trial, he called out rather sternly, "What have I to do with Mr. Wesley? Carry him back whence you brought him." Almost dumfounded by this answer, they retreated from the door; but the rest of the mob came up and began pounding upon the door and calling out threateningly to the justice to open it. A servant came with a warning message from the justice, but they still continued to pound and cry out for the door to be opened. His son next came, and in a stern voice inquired who they were and what they wanted. "What have the Methodists done," he asked, "that you should thus apprehend their leader?" "Why, an't please your worship," answered one of the men, "they sing psalms all day, and make folks rise at five in the morning; and what would your worship advise us to do?" "Why, to go home and be quiet," returned the justice's son, who like his father was a peaceful man.

Some of the mob felt inclined to take this advice, but the majority still demanded that he should be tried before a justice. It was finally decided that they should push on to Walsall and bring him up

before Justice Persehouse; so off they went again, dragging the helpless Wesley with them.

At about seven o'clock they reached Walsall. On arriving at the house and applying for admittance, the justice sent word that he was in bed and would not be disturbed. Again their wicked designs were thwarted. While they were deliberating what to do, and the cooler-headed of them were advising a return to Wednesbury and the release of Mr. Wesley, another mob that had been formed at Walsall came rushing down upon them, knocking them right and left and trampling on them as they fell.

In the confusion that ensued Mr. Wesley was left in the hands of the Walsall mob. He was entirely unhurt, and tried to speak to the crowd, but they yelled and hooted so that his voice was completely drowned. They were indeed like fiends possessed. Some of the Wednesbury mob now came back and united with them, while many women also ran up and joined the rabble. In a short while, evidently having arrived at some decision, they set off toward the neighboring town of Darlaston, pulling Mr. Wesley along with them. As they were entering the town Mr. Wesley chanced to catch sight of the wide-open door of a large house near at hand. He attempted to break away from the crowd and enter it, but a man caught him roughly by the hair and jerked him back. They now seized him and carried him from one end of the town to the other through the main street, hooting and yelling like so many demons. But, strange to say, he was not in the least hurt; neither

did he feel any pain, as he himself tells us, nor even weariness. Underneath were the Everlasting Arms, while over all God kept watch.

As they came to the open door of a shop in the western end of the town Wesley tried again to escape by passing through it; but seeing his intention, the owner at once barred his way, declaring he dared not let him in, for if he did the mob would at once pull his house down. None the more dismayed, Wesley turned around upon the sill of the door, so as to face the mob, and in a voice that immediately commanded their attention asked them if they would not hear him speak. "No! no!" a chorus of voices cried; then again, "Knock his brains out!" "Down him!" "Kill him at once!" But others said, "Nay, but we will hear him!" Silence at length obtained, he began by asking them what harm he had done them. "Which of you have I wronged by word or deed?" he asked, then continued talking to them for a quarter of an hour, until his voice failed from the great strain put upon it. When this happened he seemed to lose control of the mob again, for they began roaring out more threateningly than ever, "Bring him away; bring him away, and let's put an end to him!" As they surged toward him his voice and strength seemed to return as by a miracle. He fell upon his knees and cried aloud to God in prayer. Then a most wonderful thing happened. The man who led the mob sprung to his side and said in broken tones: "Sir, I will spend my life for you; follow me, and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head." Two

or three others now joined him, and all making the same protestations; but the majority of the mob still cried out, "Knock him on the head!" "Kill him!" Then up spoke the man in whose door he stood—the very man who only a few moments before had barred his way: "For shame! for shame! let him go!" A stalwart and honest butcher, coming up at this time, also added his voice to that of the shop-keeper, declaring that it was a shame to treat Wesley so. This worthy butcher showed his interest by deeds as well as words, for, baring his powerful arm, he at once began to thrust in among the mob, driving back several of those who were pressing Wesley against the wall. Under these sturdy and powerful blows the mob soon fell back, when the three or four men who had first crowded around Wesley with words of penitence and offers of assistance took him and led him away.

But the temper of the majority was not yet broken, although some of their heads had nearly come under the butcher's telling blows. There was a bridge not far away, and when Mr. Wesley and his body-guard reached it, and were on the point of passing over, the mob again set upon them and came near doing them serious hurt; but they managed to escape by hastening round to where there was a mill-dam and across it to a meadow beyond, where the darkness soon concealed them from their enemies.

It was ten o'clock at night when Wednesbury was at last reached. Here Mr. Wesley found his friends in a great state of alarm on his account. They were

engaged in fervent prayer for his safety at the time of his entrance. He joined with a swelling and grateful heart in thanksgiving to God for his wonderful deliverance. In all the recent conflict he had lost "only one flap of his waistcoat and a little skin from one of his hands." "From first to last," he says, "I was as calm as if I had been in my study."

Verily this was no ordinary man. He knew not what fear was. Not a tremor shook his frame, even at the most perilous moment. He felt that God was ever near, and in this consciousness was calm and peaceful and strong. Not once, he says, did he fall or even make a stumble. Had he fallen he might not have been able to get up again, but would have been crushed to death. From first to last the "All-sustaining Arms" were about him. Many times a stout, repulsive-looking man tried to strike him over the head with a stick, but something always intervened—Wesley was either pushed forward by the surging crowd just in time to be out of reach of the blow, or else the man was pushed backward. Another man rushed up and moved his club to strike, but just as he had it raised above his head he suddenly dropped it and began instead to stroke Wesley's hair, remarking as he did so, to some one behind him, "What soft hair he has!"

Another remarkable thing was that the very men who at first were the bitterest against him the soonest became his friends. One of the women who had been with the mob at Walsall, and one of the most

violent and outspoken in her denunciations, came to him at Darlaston, and, seeking to shield him with her body, declared that no one should touch him. She was at once knocked down, and would doubtless have been killed had not one of the men cried quickly, "Hold, Tom; it is honest Murchin!" His escape all the way through forms one of the most marvelous on record.

The morning after these thrilling experiences Wesley mounted his horse and rode through the streets of Wednesbury on his way to Nottingham. His friends begged to be allowed to accompany him, at least through the town, but he firmly refused. He said that he desired especially to make the trip alone. No one accosted him. All was quiet. At no point was there any sign of the howling mob who the day before had made such a pandemonium of the streets—instead, several quiet-looking people civilly spoke to him. In more than one of them he felt assured that he recognized those who had been with the mob the evening before.

At Nottingham John Wesley met his brother Charles, and thus speaks of the occasion: "My brother came, delivered out of the mouths of the lions. His clothes were torn to tatters; he looked like a soldier of Christ. The mob of Wednesbury, Darlaston, and Walsall carried him about for several hours with a full intent to murder him; but his work was not done, or he had now been with the 'souls under the altar.'"

Verily his work was *not* done!

THE FIRST MARTYR TO METHODISM.

WITHIN a short time after Nelson had been seized and impressed into the army, another brave proclaimer of the Methodist faith was forced to pass through the like indignities. This was Thomas Beard, a peaceable, industrious man, who had been torn from his trade, his wife, and his children, and sent away to become a soldier, for no other reason than that he had "called sinners to repentance."

Beard had been a fellow-prisoner with Nelson, and afterward served with him in the same regiment. But he had a less happy fate, for before friends could interfere for his release he was taken sick and sent to the hospital at Newcastle. His was a brave spirit, and under all the wrongs heaped upon him he bore himself as a true soldier of the cross. When lying on his hard cot at the hospital, sick and suffering, he still continued to praise God unceasingly. High fevers came on and he was bled, but either through the ignorance or the willful neglect of the surgeon the arm was allowed to fester. A few days later it mortified, had to be amputated, and caused his death. He was a man much loved by all who knew him, and his untimely taking off was greatly deplored, especially by his fellow-laborers in the Methodist ranks. Nelson wept for him as for a brother, and John Wesley writing of him in his *Journal* closes with the lines:

Servant of God, well done! well hast thou fought
The better fight; who singly hath maintained
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of God, in word mightier than they in arms.

There is no doubt that Thomas Beard was sacrificed through the implacable hate of the enemies of his faith. It was of the death of this brave and pious soldier, the first martyr to Methodism, that Charles Wesley wrote two of his most feeling hymns, from one of which these verses are taken:

Soldier of Christ, adieu!
Thy conflicts here are past,
Thy Lord hath brought thee through,
And given the crown at last:
Rejoice to wear the glorious prize,
Rejoice with God in paradise.

There all thy sufferings cease,
There all thy griefs are o'er:
The prisoner is at peace,
The mourner weeps no more:
From man's oppressive tyranny
Thou liv'st, thou liv'st forever free!

* * *

HOW METHODISM SWEPT THE UPPER RANKS.

WE have seen how Methodism up to this time, although it had become such a help and blessing to the poor, had made but little headway among the rich and great. But it was now to speed its way like the electric bolt of heaven through the hardened social crust of England's upper circles. And she who was to become the gracious means through which this result should be obtained was Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, the daughter of an earl and the wife of another. How serenely does her beautiful and benign figure stand forth from the foreground of early Meth-

odism! Truly has it been said of her that "she had her place and her work from God." With a "strain of royal blood in her veins," beautiful, wealthy, courted, with her companions from earliest years princes, dukes, and others of noble lineage, her proudest boast, nevertheless, was that she was "an humble follower of the Lord Jesus Christ."

One day among those who stood listening to a sermon by one of John Wesley's preachers was the noble Lady Margaret Hastings, a sister-in-law of the Countess of Huntingdon. The plain, forcible words sent conviction to her heart, and from that moment she knew neither rest nor peace until she too had found the blessing of which the preacher spoke. Shortly after this, going on a visit to her sister-in-law, almost her first words after those of greeting were to tell the Countess of John Wesley and of his itinerant preachers who were going about preaching to rich and poor alike, in the parks, in the commons, by the road-side, at the fashionable watering-places, anywhere and everywhere that they could gain an audience. "O!" declared the Lady Margaret at the close, "since I have heard them and known and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, I have been as happy as an angel!" The remark, "happy as an angel," struck the Countess with peculiar force. *What* was it to be as happy as an angel? O that she too might experience the feeling! Surely it was this happiness she had been seeking ever since the time, when only nine years old, she had seen the body of a little village maiden, just the same age as herself,

borne to the grave amidst a concourse of weeping friends, and realized that she too might die, even as young as she was; but with all her efforts, her earnest, constant striving, she had not yet found it. And *why* had she not? Surely she had tried with all her mind and strength. Ah, she had yet to realize that it takes something more than the mind and strength, something infinitely more. What was it her sister had said about this salvation being *given* by the Lord Jesus Christ? Was it then after all a *gift*, and not bought through "many good works," but a "*free gift*," one bestowed "without money and without price," through the simple faith and trust in Him who died for all? At last the burden rolled from her troubled heart, the scales fell from her eyes, the radiant light of God's love and power came pouring upon her soul in such glorious floods that like Lady Margaret she too could say, "I am as happy as an angel!" She was very well aware of the opposition and ridicule with which her "newborn faith" would meet among her haughty and aristocratic acquaintances. It required a truly heroic soul to stem the tide that would now set against her, the sport that would be made of her for having gone over to the fanatical doctrine of the "ranting Methodists." But she was equal to the requirement. She had the courage of the noble blood that flowed in her veins; she saw her duty clearly, and resolved to live faithfully up to her convictions. One of her first steps was to send for the Revs. John and Charles Wesley, tell them of her happy experience, and invite them to preach in her



THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

house. She told them also that from that time forth it was her unalterable determination to help them in every way she could to spread the doctrine of the new faith to the uttermost ends of the kingdom. Nobly did she fulfill the promise!

It soon became known throughout the aristocratic circle in which she moved that the Lady Selina had become a Methodist. At this there was a great stir, and many scenes, as might be supposed. Some openly and angrily disapproved, others sharply and severely criticised behind her back, and others again laughed at her and told her she was very foolish, while all were loud and emphatic in their denunciation of the prating Methodists. Some even went so far as to try to persuade her husband to *compel* her to renounce the Methodist faith. But although he was not a Christian himself, he was too manly a man, too staunch an upholder of freedom of thought and action to put any restraint upon the liberty of another, especially when that other was the wife he so truly loved and honored. He, however, after much worry, finally consented to send for a bishop to talk with her, and to try and persuade her that she need not be "so strict and zealous." This bishop, whose name was Benson, was the very one who had ordained Whitefield to the ministry. He was quite a learned and consequential man, but with all his learning he found himself no match for the Countess, burning as was her heart with the immortal fire of God's love. The bishop showed bad temper for a bishop, for, finding himself outwitted at every turn, he became

very angry and declared that he was sorry that he had ever ordained Whitefield to go on in the way he was going, preaching sermons to the hurt of the Church, and constantly drawing away its members. "Mark my words!" exclaimed the Countess: "on your dying-bed you will reflect on it with pleasure." She was right. Years after, the bishop, dying, sent to ask Whitefield's prayers, and also to make him a handsome offer of money to carry on his work.

The Lady Selina kept faithfully on her way. Both the Wesleys and Whitefield preached statedly at her home. At first very few of her friends could be induced to come and give them a hearing, but when disarmed of their hostility through the Countess's winning courtesy, they began to attend the meetings—at first from curiosity, but at last from deeper feelings.

Many stirring scenes were enacted in the Countess's drawing-room. To depict them as they were would require a master-hand. The courtly Lord Chesterfield, the Countess's brother—he who was called "the first gentleman of his century"—was at first a coldly critical listener, then, touched deeper than he cared to show, confessed to Whitefield: "Sir, I will not tell you what I shall tell others, how much I approve you."

On one occasion, when Whitefield was preaching in the Countess's house to a large and fashionable audience—among whom there was no more interested hearer than the courtly Chesterfield—he chanced, in illustrating the peril of a sinner, to use the figure of a blind man led by a little dog. As they entered upon a path that led along the edge of a precipice, the dog

was supposed to have suddenly broken the string and darted off in pursuit of some game. The blind man was then pictured as groping his way by means of his staff, and, unaware of his danger, gradually drawing nearer and nearer the edge of the precipice. Reaching the mouth of the gulf, his staff suddenly fell from his hands and dropped into the chasm, which was so deep as to give back no echo of the fall. Thinking that the cane had only fallen to the earth at his feet, the blind man stooped to pick it up, was propelled forward, and meeting no resistance stood for one dread moment poised upon one foot only, and the next went plunging headlong into the yawning depths below! At this point in the preacher's wonderful word-painting the listening Chesterfield was so carried away by the vividness of his descriptive powers that he sprung excitedly from his seat, exclaiming, "He is gone! he is gone!"

So great an interest did this courtly lord take in the preaching of Whitefield and the Wesleys that he had them several times to hold services at his own private chapel at Bretley Hall. Both his wife and sister became earnest converts to the faith. If *he* had but done the same, he would not have had cause to write at the close of his vain and brilliant life: "I have not been as wise as Solomon, but I have been as wicked, and I can truly say, 'All is vanity and vexation of spirit.'"

The cold and unbelieving Hume listened to this Methodist preaching with unfeigned pleasure and surprise. For plain power and clear, searching truth,

where had he heard its equal? Horace Walpole, the gay wit, to hide his deeper feelings, could only seek to mask them under the triflings of his airy badi-nage. Even the openly avowed infidel, Lord Boling-broke, could not but admit that there was something in the telling power of this new doctrine that amazed and perplexed him. His brother, Lord Saint John, was wiser; he *inquired* into the cause of his perplexity, saw the way clearly, embraced the faith, and became an earnest Christian. The Countess of Suffolk—she who is described as the reigning beauty of the court of George II.—was thrown into such an agony of conviction under a sermon of Whitefield as to declare that the preaching was aimed at her expressly.

Thus the good work went on—high and low, rich and poor sharing alike in the “gracious visitation,” and each alike placed under serious conviction. And the Lady Selina—what of her during all this time, when so many of her aristocratic acquaintances had fallen as corn before the wind? She had gone on enlarging in zeal, and speaking out for her Master wherever and whenever she could. Many of the noblest women in England owed their spiritual awaken-ing to some arresting word spoken to them at the very moment when they seemed deepest in their fol-lies. Whenever she was in London the Countess would turn her back on all the costly churches where the nobles worshiped, and go to hear the Wesleys at the humble Foundry Church, or Whitefield at his Tabernacle. She was the ardent friend of both, and when differences of opinion in regard to certain

points of doctrine arose between them, at one time threatening to part them forever, she became the gracious harmonizer who kept them, if not brothers in creed, yet friends at heart unto the end.

In the very midst of her noble work the hand of affliction was laid heavily upon the Countess, but it seemed only to draw her nearer to the One who chastened. She lost her children, then her husband, and all within a short while of each other. Instead of wrapping herself in "the black weeds of widowhood," and sitting down to weep and rail at the coldness and injustice of God, she rose up in the full vigor of her faith and strength, and "filling her purse with gold, and her lips with words of divine wisdom," went more actively than ever about her Master's work. "I want my heart on fire always," she declared, "not for self-delight, but to spread the gospel from pole to pole."

Noble woman! gracious benefactress of a struggling faith! how broad and beautiful the path in which you walked! how truly God-inspired the zeal that filled your loyal heart!

That she might have more to give to the cause of Him she loved so well, she sold her jewels, gave up her handsome equipage, reduced her expenditures, left her lovely home at Donnington Park, and went to dwell in one plainly and simply furnished. She built chapels in London, Brighton, and other places, and fitted up others from halls and theaters, and founded and maintained a college for young preachers in Wales. It has been said of her that she built chapels faster

than she could find preachers to take charge of them. Dividing England into six districts, she sent one of her preachers regularly into each, with instructions to "preach in every place, large or small," where there was a chance to sow one precious seed of the faith. In this way she had at her death encompassed almost the entire kingdom with the broad belt of Christian love and knowledge.

She sent money to Georgia to help support the orphan-house Whitefield had founded there, and still more to be used in the conversion of the Indians. In fact, she seemed never weary of giving so long as money remained in her coffers. It has been estimated that she gave no less than *half a million of dollars* to the cause of Methodism, besides many thousands in private charities. But even better, she gave her unswerving faith and earnest prayers.

At last, when the frosts of eighty-four winters had silvered her hair, and her feet had long refused to run apace with the active promptings of her loyal heart, this zealous and faithful servant was called to meet Him whom she had so devotedly served. Her last words were: "My work is done; I have nothing to do but go to my Father."



THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF METHODISM.

ALTHOUGH long opposed and persecuted from all sides, Methodism was now widely and rapidly extending. There were "societies" in almost every town of any size "from Newcastle to Land's End."

Besides the Wesleys and Whitefield there were four regular clergymen, in addition to half a dozen lay preachers—that is, those upon whom a bishop had not placed his hands in ordination—and numerous exhorters. Wesley believed the time was fully ripe for some sort of an organization among the clergy. There were many grave matters he wished to present to them, and in regard to which he desired their opinions. He therefore called a meeting, or conference, of these ministers, both regular and lay.

This conference, which was the first conference of Methodism, assembled at the old Foundry Church in London on Monday June 25, 1744. On the preceding Sunday the preachers had met and partaken of the Lord's Supper together. On the following Monday morning Charles Wesley preached before them a most impressive sermon. Every face wore an expression which showed that these true and tried men realized the grave importance of the work for which they were assembled. They felt as workmen who had come to lay the first stones in the foundation of a building the whole future strength and beauty of which depended upon them.

The conference having been opened with singing and prayer, the next step was to draw up rules and regulations for its government. These rules were very clear and simple, as every thing connected with Methodism up to that time had been, and as it has continued on down to the present time. The men who represented her clergy were themselves "single of eye," and had met in all simplicity and sincerity of mind.

In the grave matters before them they had come determined to inquire "as little children who have every thing to learn." They agreed that "every point should be examined from its foundation," that each one of them should be allowed "to speak freely what was in his heart," and that every question brought up before them should be "bolted to the bran." How well the foundation of the future building had been begun!

One question proposed at the very beginning of this conference deserves to be kept in perpetual remembrance: "How far does each agree to submit to the unanimous judgment of the rest?" With such a start as this it is no wonder that the conference maintained the utmost love and harmony. The proceedings show that throughout its entire session this free, fearless right of discussion was never once denied to any member.

Having settled its rules for government, the conference next proceeded to business. The first question brought up was, "What shall we teach?" The next, "What shall we do?" Two days were occupied in discussing the first, but out of it all came the one clear, decisive answer: "We shall teach repentance, faith, justification, sanctification, and the witness of the Spirit." To this day these five foundation stones of Methodism have in no wise been changed. The second question, of course, related to a withdrawal from the Church of England. They assuredly had every reason to desire to come out from a Church whose clergy and people had so shamefully

used them. But the hearts of these upright and sturdy first preachers of Methodism were of a kind that suffereth long and is patient. They kept close beside them the garments of charity with which to clothe their neighbors. Besides, they could not so soon tear themselves away from a Church at whose altars they had been for so long a time such earnest communicants. As to Wesley, while sharing these feelings he was also hopeful that the Church of England clergy would be so reached through "the extending revival" as to do away with the necessity of a separate Church. "Methodism," he confidently asserted, "will either be thrust out, or will leaven the whole Church." Both of these things have been accomplished. Thus, from the first, "secession from the Church" found no favor.

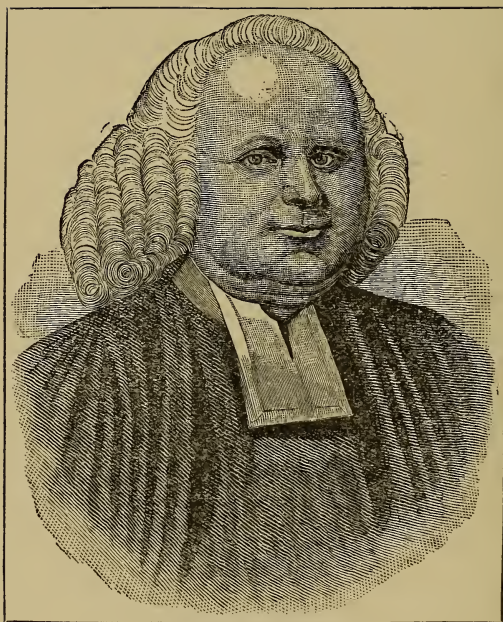
The suggestions brought up at this conference as to "the best general method of preaching" have never been improved upon. They were: (1) to invite; (2) to convince; (3) to offer Christ; lastly, to build up.

Two questions well considered at the time are of peculiar interest to us now. The first of these was, "Is it lawful to bear arms?" and the other, "Is it lawful to use the law?" Both were decided in the affirmative.

During the session of the conference Lady Huntingdon entertained its members at her mansion in London. In her parlors Wesley preached one of his most telling sermons: "What hath God wrought?" This was the first of the series of "household sermons" that gave to her ladyship's residence "the air

of a chapel." Wesley had two of his clergymen with him who took part in the services. Around him sat his lay preachers, his "peers in calling if not in churchly orders."

After a session of five days the conference adjourned, and each soldier of Christ went forth newly equipped and strengthened for the battle with sin and Satan.



GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

IN WALES.

KINDLING THE GOSPEL FLAME.

STILL ablaze with the holy zeal that had awakened the colliers of Kingswood, Whitefield passed on into Wales in 1739. It would be impossible to imagine a more deplorable state of affairs than at that time existed in the little principality, although at the period of Whitefield's first visit much had been done to alleviate matters through the efforts of two very zealous men. From the Middle Ages down to the time when the flame of the great revival known as Methodism had first been kindled within her mountain strongholds, darkness and superstition had reigned over Wales. It is true that in the days of James I. a clergyman by the name of Wroth had made earnest efforts to spread the light, but the small fire he had started had long since gone out, leaving only the cold, dead ashes. Nor was this darkness only a spiritual darkness: the ignorance of the people was hardly surpassed by that of the most benighted country on the face of the globe. Scarcely any of the lower classes could read at all. As to the morals of the country, they were so thoroughly corrupt that the name of Wales had long since become a synonym for all that was the most depraved in the human character. And in this respect there

was no difference between high and low, not even between the people and the clergymen. In short, "gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness prevailed through the whole country." The people knew not God, nor did those who were supposed to have their spiritual welfare at heart seem to care in the least to enlighten them. From the pulpit the name of the Saviour was scarcely ever spoken; or if it was, it was only in a vague and general way. The ministers of the few churches scattered through the principality were far more concerned as to what they should eat and drink than as to the starving souls of the miserable people. On Sundays, it is true, there were large congregations at the principal churches, for the poorer classes made it a rule to attend the services of the morning, doubtless as a kind of salve to their conscience for the riotous excesses of the afternoon.

Every Sabbath afternoon a Welsh game called "Achwaren-gamp" was regularly entered into. In this all the young men of the neighborhood gave a trial of their strength, and to see which the people came in great crowds—men, women, and children. On Saturday nights, especially during the summer months, the young men and women engaged in what they called "Nos werthian-cann," or singing eves. These singing eves consisted of various songs and tunes, either solos, duets, or choruses, in which the singers accompanied themselves on the harp, or oftener sung to the noisy clapping of hands and stamping of feet. Various dances were also engaged in. The singing eve generally extended into the

dawn of the Sabbath, when the festivities were brought to a close by the performance of a rustic drama. Sometimes these dramas lasted throughout the entire day. They were of the most questionable sort, and often many disgraceful scenes occurred. While the dramas were in progress at a hall or in some grove in the open air, a set of vagabonds called the "Bobl gerdded," or "walking men," paraded among the people, forcing them to give them all sorts of gifts. They then went for a march through the streets, singing, cursing, and shouting.

Notwithstanding their participation in these revelries, the Welsh are described at that time as a superstitious and even a gloomy people. They still retained many beliefs of paganism and not a few of the superstitious practices of popery. Especially was this displayed at their funerals, which we are told, "like those of the Irish, were scenes of riot and drunkenness, followed by prayers for the release of the deceased from the pains of purgatory." So blinded were they by their superstition that it is recorded that when Methodism was first introduced among them they used to cross their foreheads and mutter a prayer to a particular saint, as though it were some horrid beast against which they needed protection. Indeed, on first coming to preach among them, John Wesley declared them "as little versed in the principles of Christianity as a Creek or Cherokee Indian." He, however, added the striking remark that "notwithstanding their superstition and ignorance the people were ripe for the gospel, and most en-

thusiastically anxious to avail themselves of every opportunity of instruction."

This then was the people among whom the zealous and devoted Whitefield, glowing with a love divine, had hastened to spread the glad light of his Master's words. The flame had already been enkindled, as has been said, but so far had done but little more than begin to creep upward. Whitefield found there Griffith Jones, a pious clergyman of the Church of England, one of the few faithful among the faithless. Although wearing the robes of the Established Church, Jones was at heart a Methodist; and not only so at heart, but he was proclaiming it abroad. He was now going through the region preaching and teaching. He also employed teachers to hold regular exercises at different places for the instruction of the people "in Scripture, catechism, and song." When Whitefield came he found no less than one hundred and twenty-eight of these schools.

Howell Harris, another zealous Churchman, was also at this time forming "societies" after the pattern of those Wesley had organized in London, Bristol, and elsewhere. Harris, like the Wesleys, had been a student at Oxford, "but disgust at the infidelity and immorality which prevailed there" drove him away; and not only this, but he sought faithfully after a purer and nobler religion than that represented in the Churches of that day. He began preaching in barns, church-yards, on the streets, whenever and wherever he could find an audience. He made nothing of delivering five or six exhorta-

tions a day. He was often assailed by mobs, persecuted by the people, fined by the magistrates, and denounced by the clergy. But through it all he seemed to be "carried on the wings of an eagle triumphantly." He ever felt the near presence of his great Captain, and strong in faith he kept on unfalteringly through every trial.

Harris and Whitefield met at Cardiff, and there held meetings together. Each was in a flame of love and zeal. No wonder the blaze soon leaped from their hearts to others. But while many caught the fire of the Spirit, we must not imagine that all was ease and smooth sailing to the brave evangelists. During one of the first sermons Whitefield preached at the town-hall in Cardiff he was greatly annoyed by some evil-disposed persons. Desiring to break up the meeting, they trailed a dead fox outside the hall, and others hunted it with their dogs, several of them even coming into the hall. It was a noisy and a shameful scene; but Whitefield kept his stand immovably and went on with the sermon, his trumpet-like voice ringing high over all the discordant sounds. At another time two dogs were turned loose in the assembly and set to fighting, but the indignant men in the congregation had them put out.

In the afternoon of the same day that the dead fox had been trailed without the hall, Whitefield returned to the same spot and preached to one of the largest and most attentive audiences that had yet greeted him in Wales. Among his hearers were many of those who had sought to annoy him in the

morning, now painfully aroused to a knowledge of their sins and crying out for a release from the burden. Many similar scenes occurred. Whitefield says of one of these congregations: "Never did I see an assembly more melted down. The love of Jesus touched them to the quick." The awakening spread. Everywhere people were heard crying out under conviction of sin and beseeching to be saved.

At Usk, the pulpit of the church being denied him, Whitefield preached under a large tree to hundreds of people whose tear-drenched faces gave eloquent proof of the tumult within. A day later at Ponty-Pool the curate kindly offered him the church, but so great was the concourse assembled that it was impossible for the building to contain them. He therefore "went and preached to all the people in the field;" and so gracious were the results of this meeting that afterward he betook himself to his rest with "such unutterable peace as no one can conceive of but those who feel it."

The flames had more than leaped upward now—they had spread far and wide, as the fires of a forest that find only seasoned timber in their track.



JOHN WESLEY ITINERATING.

UPON a pressing invitation from Howell Harris, and urged by Whitefield, Wesley set out for Wales on Monday, October 15, 1739—going as a true itinerant, traveling on horseback and with no other luggage than a pair of scant saddle-bags.

His first sermon was at the foot of the Devaudon, a high hill two or three miles beyond Chepstow. There was some rude behavior, but altogether the congregation seemed to look upon him as a friend who had come to bring them a glad message which they should have heard long ago.

At two o'clock the next afternoon he stood preaching to about a thousand people, who, caring not that the frost was sharp, stood hanging upon his words as he described to them "the plain old religion of the Church of England," now everywhere spoken against "under the name of Methodism." It was an affecting scene, for though many of them understood English "tolerably well," yet the looks, the sighs, the gestures, and the groans of those who did not showed how eloquently God was speaking to their hearts through the voice of conviction. Men, women, and children were present, and almost to a soul they seemed "melted down into tears" together. Never had the pure gospel fire leaped forth more gloriously in Wales.

On the following morning, though the frost was "sharper than before," the people stood in rapt attention upon his words. The congregation had now considerably increased. There were loud cries, deep groans, and earnest prayers as he discoursed to them of that salvation which can come alone through faith—faith in Jesus the Saviour.

At the hour of noon he stopped at Usk to preach to a congregation of very poor people, and a wonderful effect was produced as he told them of that Sav-

ious who had come into the world to save rich and poor alike. Mothers clung to their children sobbing; with piercing cries wives threw their arms about their husbands' necks; old women fell upon their knees clasping their hands imploringly to Heaven. One gray-headed man wept and trembled so that it seemed body and soul must be sundered through the excess of his feelings. Old and young were alike affected, and, as at Kingswood among the colliers, "all were drenched in tears together." At this place he was joined by several of those to whom he had preached at Devaudon. They were as beings who had suddenly lost their minds, "mourning and refusing to be comforted till they had redemption through Christ's blood." With these Wesley talked long and earnestly, nor left till many had found that peace precious above all else.

At Ponty-Pool, being unable to obtain a more convenient place, Wesley stood in the streets and cried aloud to five or six hundred people, who had gathered about him, to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and they should be saved." Many melted into tears; others again cried aloud for mercy; two or three ran about throwing themselves into the air and distorting their limbs as though suddenly bereft of their senses. A few evil-inclined persons threw stones and clods of dirt, but no one was hurt. Here Wesley had a thrilling scene with a poor woman who had followed him from place to place since leaving Devaudon. There the bolt of conviction had pierced her heart; she strove to draw it out, to evade the Voice

that called to her, but there was no escape. Unable to endure the torture, she left her home and followed on after Wesley. She walked from Devaudon to Abergavenny; and just missing him there, she kept on to Usk. Meeting the same disappointment at the latter place, she pushed on to Ponty-Pool, and there came upon him just as he stood crying to the people, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved!" These words added a second shaft to her wound, and in agony of spirit unbearable she sunk at Wesley's feet crying out to him to relieve her. Charitable hands quickly removed her to a lodging-place. There Wesley went and talked to her, and prayed God to heal her of her iniquities. Finally, about one o'clock in the morning, after one of the fiercest contests Wesley had ever seen, and during which the soul seemed nearly rent from the body, the Lord "got unto himself the victory." Stopping barely long enough to recruit exhausted nature, the woman arose and went on her way, singing and praising God.

At five o'clock in the afternoon Wesley reached Cardiff, where two or three months before Howell Harris and Whitefield had seen such pleasing results crown their efforts. Alas! the ardor of many had grown cold since then, while the ranks of the opponents had sensibly increased. But God's Spirit was still abroad with the power to move the waters. The church being refused him, Wesley preached in the Shire Hall, "a large, convenient place," on his favorite text, "Believe, and thou shalt be saved." Several "labored

much to make a disturbance." Squibs were thrown, and a few rotten eggs. There was also much loud talking and stamping of feet, intended to drown the voice of the speaker. But Wesley had not been preaching many minutes when these demonstrations changed to cries of conviction, loud groans, and convulsive sobs. At seven o'clock he preached at the same place to a larger audience. A number professed conversion, while many others, Wesley says, "went away believing our report."

On the next Friday morning he discoursed at Newport to "the most insensible, ill-behaved people he had ever seen in Wales." Many mocked him; others made faces and used all sorts of insulting epithets. Some did not stop short of violence. Various missiles were hurled, some of them narrowly missing the speaker. One "ancient man" during a greater part of the services "cursed and swore almost incessantly." He had in his hands a large stone which he made many attempts to hurl directly at Wesley's head, but was every time prevented by some one in the audience. "Such," exclaims Wesley with honest contempt, "were the champions, such the arms against Methodism!"

At four o'clock on the same afternoon Wesley preached again at the Shire Hall. Many of the gentry were present, and he deemed it a ripe occasion to rebuke them for their riotous excesses. Accordingly, with great freedom of speech, he held forth upon, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

He expected a great outcry against him—even to be stopped in the midst of his sermon by some one of the consequential magistrates present—but to his surprise there was no such result. Instead, many seemed cut to the heart, while over all was an air of serious thought. At the close of the meeting many pressed about him, entreating that he would make still clearer his words and show them more plainly how best to mend their ways.

At six o'clock, so deep and wide-spread had been the feeling, "almost the entire town" came together—such an assembly as the Shire Hall had scarcely held before. A quiet and respectful attentiveness pervaded the whole assembly. Never had Wesley preached with such force and power. Soon sinners began to fall on every side. So loud were their cries and groans that the preacher's voice could scarcely be heard. The meeting continued upward of three hours, and among those converted were a number of the gentry, some of whom had been the bitterest opponents of the Methodists. "May the seed they receive," prayed Wesley, "have its fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life!"

Even more astonishing results greeted Wesley on his second and third journeys into Wales. Everywhere he found the people aroused concerning their sins, and seeking to flee from the wrath to come. At Penreul, near Ponty-Pool, he called out, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!" and great indeed was the shaking. At another place many came to him after the meeting "in such mourning as he had

scarcely seen." A poor drunkard, who had heard him preach at noon of that day, came to him at midnight, and did not leave him until he was reclothed with new life.

By 1744 the truth had spread "with mighty effect" throughout Wales.

* * *

A TRUE HERO OF WALES.

AMIDST the mountain strongholds of the little principality of Wales a true hero had at length arisen—Howell Harris. For long ages the Welsh heart had fired at mention of the name of King Arthur the Peerless; but what was Arthur after all but "an undying name in romance?"—in history a mere nothing! Even the bold deeds of Llewellyn, the valiant Prince of Wales, immortalized in song and story, were as naught beside those of this man, who, to give the words of eternal life to his dying countrymen, faced death a hundred times over. No Welsh hero, either real or mythical, had so brave a heart as he. Their deeds sprung from a desire for glory; his from the pure love of Christ flaming in his heart and yearning pity for the lost souls of men. His experiences and trials year after year were indeed "past belief" and "beyond those of any other evangelist," as sharp as were some of their conflicts, as narrow as their escapes. Everywhere he was treated as "a monster ravaging the land." By men who called themselves gentlemen were the lowest and meanest of indignities heaped upon him. Even men of "wealth and

culture," clergymen and magistrates, incited mobs against him, and more than once paid them out of the coffers of the Church. "When I arose in the morning," he says, "I was in daily expectation of my crosses." And such crosses! Often it seemed that they were far beyond the strength of poor humanity to bear. But a higher Power sustained him. God blessed him with an inflexible courage, and "from conquering he went on to conquer."

At Newport, where he was preaching once, he was set upon by a mob that stripped the coat from his back, tore his trousers into shreds, and bore away his peruke at the top of a pole, leaving him in the rain, "bare-headed under the reproach of Christ." At another time they nearly drowned him with a flood of filthy water. Like Stephen of old, he was again and again treated to showers of stones. Many hit him, others tore through his clothing; but he stood unyielding, and brought away from the conflict a "bleeding brow, but an undaunted spirit."

While addressing a congregation at Caerleon, a fierce mob set upon him and his companion, a lay preacher by the name of Seward. Clubs and stones were used. In the midst of the conflict poor Seward became blind from blows upon the eyes; but still, in darkness as he was and suffering the intensest pain, he boldly remained at Harris's side, saying, "We had better endure this than hell." The stones gashed Harris's head, and one club struck him; but, with the blood pouring in streams from his face, he stood fearlessly looking upon the infuriated mob, nor did

he yield an inch of his ground until his sermon was finished.

Again, he had a thrilling experience at a funeral—one of those disgraceful scenes, or “wakes” as they were called, of riot and drunkenness. Taking his stand dauntlessly in their midst, he not only scourged them for the shamelessness of their behavior, but made a bold attack upon the superstitious practices of popery. Instantly he was besieged by a howling mob, shrieking like madmen. Many strove to reach him, swearing that he should die. Others tore at his clothing; some used clubs. He was bruised from head to foot and nearly stripped of his clothing, when at last he succeeded in releasing himself from the enraged assembly. But not until he had said every word he desired did he quit the scene.

At a fair he boldly denounced “the lying vanities” in which the whole scene was tricked out, and passionately urged the young people to turn from the evil of their ways, and seek Him who could alone guide their feet in the paths of peace and pleasantness. Water was thrown upon him, then eggs, rotten fruit, and clods of dirt. He was hissed, and finally driven from the grounds, but he returned with voice more trumpet-like than ever.

One Sunday, longing to hear from other lips a declaration of the way of truth and life, he attended the church of a leading clergyman. Alas, how bitter was his disappointment! Instead of a discourse sweetened with charity and fragrant with the essence of brotherly love and good-will, it was one of bitterest

hate—in short, a personal attack of the meanest sort, in which he was made to figure “as a minister to the devil, an enemy to God, to the Church, and to all mankind.” Not content to let the matter end with this tirade, the clergyman from his pulpit called upon his congregation to join with him “in putting down such a man,” at the same time pointing him out. They were only too ready to comply. After the meeting, they set upon him as he was going away from the church and stoned him until it seemed a miracle that he got home with any life left in his poor bruised and broken body. “For such times,” said John Wesley, “God made such men.”

While preaching in another place, where a riot was threatened, a gun was presented to his forehead; but even when the weapon seemed almost certain to be discharged, his soul, he tells us, “was happy.” Another rioter struck him on the mouth “until the blood came;” others covered him with mud and water and gunpowder. He left the spot, procured a change of clothing, washed himself, dressed, and returned to continue his preaching.

Is it surprising that with such efforts as these he should have “reformed Wales?”—that he should have become to her people, at last, awakened and Christianized through his labors, such a hero as the good and true delight to honor? What were the deeds of the mythical Arthur, of the bold Llewellyn, to his? Through his agency thousands were brought to Christ. His name is yet in Wales “a household word.”

His health at last failing under these trials, he went to live at Trevecca, in the place where Lady Huntingdon afterward founded her famous college in an old castle of one of the former lords of Snowdon, Harris's home is described by Wesley as one of the most charming he had seen in Wales. "There were walks in a wood, a mound raised in a meadow, commanding a delightful prospect, and a large and beautiful house." Surely, after so fierce a warfare, the battle-scarred soldier was entitled to such a retreat.

Disabled in body as he was, he did not rest from his labors. He had as many as a hundred residents beneath his roof—chiefly poor young men, employed in various ways about the estate, and many of whom he was training to go forth as bold exhorters in the cause which ill health had forced him to abandon. He preached to them every morning "at their rising," and was constantly admonishing them to be instant in praising and serving the Lord. His little company of itinerants soon went forth to besiege and possess the land in the name of Him who has promised to redeem Israel from her iniquities.

The war between England and France in America being threatened, he asked of his young men which of them, being "first earnest with the Lord in prayer," would go to battle for king and country. Five went "in the strength of the Lord." Harris equipped them out of his private means, and prayed for their welfare. Whitefield gave them a motto: "Fear nothing while Christ is Captain."

When an invasion from France was threatened,

some years later, Harris himself entered the king's service, and for three years bravely did duty in his captain's uniform. He carried his Methodism into camp, into battle; he preached it on every side, often when his regiment was on the march, in some of the most ignorant and depraved districts of all England. The usual persecutions came. Not once did he flinch.

But at last death overtook him—his hero-days were numbered. On the ceiling of his sick-room was gilded "the awful, glorious name of Jehovah." It gleamed in letters of living flame before his dying eyes, it burst in a strain of rapture from his stiffening lips. To this day many pilgrims from Methodist shores gaze upon it in awe and reverence. All Wales wept as one man when on the day of his burial "devout men" bore to the tomb a faithful lover of Christ Jesus, a true hero of the people, a saint well meet for the Master's eternal kingdom.

* * *

CHARLES WESLEY'S LAST NIGHT IN WALES.

THE last night of Charles Wesley's first visit to Wales was a stormy one. He had arrived at Cardiff, from which point he expected to take passage by water for a return to Bristol. With him were Howell Harris and a company of devout people. They had been aiding him for the past three or four nights in a series of meetings he had been holding in the place. So successful had these meetings proved that they had attracted public attention from the theater, leaving the play-house almost bare of an audience, while

the crowds flocked to the hall where the revival was in progress. This so angered the players that they determined to be revenged. Accordingly, joined by such of the populace as regarded the meetings with hostility, and headed by a certain physician who had taken great offense at one of Wesley's sermons, they prepared to assault the preacher and his associates.

That night, just as the Methodists had begun their services by the singing of a hymn, the mob set upon the house. They found no trouble in effecting an entrance, as the doors were open. On reaching Wesley the physician attempted to strike him with a cane, but in the confusion that now arose he was tripped up and fell to the floor, cursing and swearing horribly as he went down. After beating about with his sword like a madman for several minutes, and injuring several persons, he was finally carried out raving, and foaming at the mouth.

At the first lull in these hostilities two magistrates, thinking to find ample excuse now to arrest the Methodists, broke into the house; but after a number of inquiries they decided that it would be no loss of valor on their part to retire more quietly than they had come. They had no sooner disappeared than the players returned with an increased rabble, and began to besiege the building. The doors having been secured, they found it difficult to effect an entrance, and so remained without, cursing, shouting, and making all sorts of vile threats. Their principal ground of complaint was that "the gospel had

starved them out." But disregarding the uproar outside, the little company within sung on undismayed.

About midnight one of the actors succeeded in effecting an entrance into the house. He had a drawn sword in his hand, and his air was that of a desperately determined man. He sprung toward Wesley, but the weapon was wrested from him, and while howling like an insane creature he was borne away and thrust without the door.

"When the sword was brought in," says Wesley, "the spirit of faith was kindled at sight of the danger. Great was our rejoicing and the uproar of the players without, who strove to force their way after their companion."

The hour having arrived for Wesley to go on board the vessel, his friends sought to dissuade him from it, as the tumult had not yet ceased. But he was resolute, and walked calmly through the midst of the rabble to the dock where his ship lay. Although there were many threatening gestures and a sea of scowling faces on every side, yet no one offered to molest him. Reaching the shore safely, he stood with his friends rendering hearty thanks to God.

Learning that the vessel would be delayed some hours, he walked back through the scowling populace and found Howell Harris and many of the devout company still assembled. He preached again, and in his audience now were several of those who had been his bitter opponents of the night. They stood around him weeping, and entreating him to

show them how they should escape the burden of their sins.

Before sailing that day, Wesley called upon a magistrate and presented him with the sword that had been taken from the player on the preceding night.



THE TORMENTED WOMAN.

It was during Mr. Wesley's tenth visit to Wales that a scene occurred which showed how strongly the poor Welsh people still clung to their dark superstitions even after the glad light of the gospel had broken in upon them. He was preaching at Llanzufried. Many scenes of unusual power had accompanied his labors. Among one of the most marked of his conversions was that of a poor woman, whom her neighbors declared "Satan had bound in an uncommon manner for several years." She was deeply convicted under the first sermon she heard Wesley preach. After her conversion she followed him to the house where he lodged, and there standing before him, and in the presence of a large gathering of people, she related those remarkable experiences that had bound her "as Satan's own" for upward of seven years. She seemed fully to believe every word that she uttered, and to still cling to the old superstitious weaknesses, though the light of Christ Jesus had been shed upon her heart. So well-nigh impossible is it to efface in a moment the fancies and growths of a life-time!

The woman stated that about seven years previous

to that time she had seriously offended one of her neighbors, who thereupon went to one Francis Morgan, a well-known man of magic in those parts, and paid him fourteen shillings "to do his worst to her." The next night while she was in bed there came on a violent storm of thunder, lightning, and rain, in the midst of which she felt "all her flesh shudder," and knew that Satan was assuredly close at hand. At the same time a horse which she kept in the stable below, and which had always conducted itself "as quiet as a lamb," now began to leap to and fro and to tear about in such a manner that she was obliged to go and turn it out. She had barely returned when a tree which stood at the end of the house was torn up by the roots. From that time forth she had no rest day nor night, being not only in the greatest torture of mind but feeling always as though red-hot pinchers were tearing at her flesh—which proved that Satan had not yet taken his departure, but was lingering at her side to torment her all he could. She had had no respite from these horrors until the hour when she felt that God had mercifully delivered her and bruised Satan under her feet.

Let us hope that with the dawning of this much of the truth the poor woman was finally led into the clear, strong light of perfect knowledge, before which all the hideous phantoms of superstition fled as the shadows of night before the morning sun. It was often in such grim powers as these that Methodism found more stubborn foes than in the most sullen and determined mob.

CHARLES WESLEY PREACHING UPON HIS KNEES.

MANY thrilling and pathetic scenes characterized the onward march of Methodism through the little principality of Wales, but we doubt if that of Charles Wesley has a parallel—preaching upon his knees when deprived of the use of his limbs by a fall.

While on his way to keep an appointment with one of the “societies,” in an out-of-the-way place, he slipped and fell, so badly injuring one of his legs as to be unable to stand upon it. Luckily some of the brethren were with him, and they quickly raised him and carried him into a rude hut near by. Although suffering the most acute pain, he spent two hours in singing, praying, and talking to his companions. They, deeply solicitous, did all they could to ease his sufferings. “Their love,” he says, “quite delighted me.”

The next morning at six o'clock, even in his maimed condition, he insisted on meeting the society. After vainly remonstrating, his brethren consented to convey him thither. At eight o'clock, a surgeon having been secured, his leg was dressed, and then Charles Wesley showed more plainly than ever the true mettle of which he was made by persisting in his determination to keep on to Wales in order to fill his appointments. He was thus carried about from place to place, preaching daily upon his knees. His brethren tried to get him to address his congregations sitting in a chair, but that he deemed too indolent an attitude for a King's soldier.

The first time he attempted to deliver his discourse

standing upon his knees he nearly fainted from the pain, but the fortitude to endure grew stronger day by day. Once he spoke "kneeling in a pouring rain," but he tells us he "felt no pains or weariness till it was over," so wonderfully was he upheld by the grace of his Master.

At Cardiff a man who had been one of the most violent persecutors of the Methodists sent his Bath-chair to convey the disabled evangelist to his next appointment. Wesley was deeply touched by this thoughtful attention, so directly in contrast with the rough usage to which he and others of his fellow-laborers in the Methodist ranks had previously been subjected. "Indeed," he writes, "the whole place at present seems turned toward us."

It was several weeks before Wesley's leg healed so that he could walk upon it, but in all this time he ceased not from his labors, preaching regularly twice each day. For nearly two weeks he preached upon his knees, then, as his wound began to heal, standing upon his crutches. "The word of God," he wrote, "is not bound if I am, but runs very swiftly." His entire history shows no higher evidence than this that the genuine Methodistic fire—that which is "born of love for Jesus and the souls of men"—glowed within his heart.



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IN IRELAND

THE STRONGHOLD STORMED.

TO the Wesleys fell the honor and the peril of making the first bold charge against the stronghold of Satan in Ireland. "I take the world for my parish," John Wesley had declared with all the deep fervor of a pure and consecrated devotion; and with this noble sentiment burning as a holy flame within his heart, he went boldly to the rescue of a land perhaps the most peculiarly cursed on earth.

For three hundred years prior to this time Ireland had been "the scandal and perplexity of its rulers." In no country under the sun had there been so blighting a mixture of misrule, oppression, and misery. As to its religious condition, justly had it been pronounced "the most singular anomaly of European history since the Reformation;" for of all countries to which the blessed light of that Reformation was offered, Ireland alone wholly and persistently refused it. Blinded either through pure ignorance or the more baneful envelopment of unjust and unreasoning prejudice, she had obstinately turned her back upon the new religion and stood stubborn in her adherence to the Church of Rome. Bitter indeed has been the punishment, for the intense fanaticism with which her people clung to popery has

prevented a harmonious assimilation with the rest of the British Empire, and through the failure of which have arisen "those abuses in its political administration" that have put upon her neck so great a yoke of oppression, tumult, and degradation.

But although ninety-nine out of every hundred of native-born Irish people remained immovable in the religion of Rome, still Protestantism in one form managed to creep into Ireland; yet better, far better would it have been if such as this had staid away. The clergymen of the few Protestant churches that were established in Ireland were in nine cases out of ten the younger sons of titled families who had been accustomed to the most riotous habits—sporting, drinking, card-playing, and the like. They had nothing to recommend them save their college degree, and often this had been obtained through no particular mental endowment of their own. Hence there was a general lack of education, both literary and moral. These men did not hesitate, even in their sacred robes, to mix in all the dissipated excesses of the neighborhood. They occupied prominent places at horse-races, they put up their bets publicly, and swaggered with the air of professional gamblers when they won. They played cards for money, even with their own parishioners, and unblushingly showed themselves to the eyes of all in a state of the most beastly intoxication.

And as these godless young clergymen relaxed in watchfulness and in uprightness of morals, just so, in a like proportion, the alertness and cunning of the

Catholic priests increased. While the former were at the horse-races or the card-table, passing in these shameless excesses the hours that should have been given to pastoral work, the latter were undertaking that pastoral work for them—that is, undertaking it according to a plan of their own. Ignorant of the truth, unenlightened and unstrengthened by those who should have been their spiritual instructors and guides, the people became an easy prey to the cunning of the Catholic priests. They visited the beds of the sick and the dying, they wrought upon their fears or worked upon their superstitions. They told them of the Church of Rome, of the wonderful power her priests had possessed through hundreds of years; of the saints and the blessed Virgin who could, upon certain conditions, help them out of all trouble. It is no wonder that the Protestant churches were soon drained at this rate, many of those in the rural districts being allowed to fall entirely into ruins.

Thus, in 1747, when John Wesley first turned his eyes upon Ireland he found that whereas not one in a hundred of the natives had left the religion of Rome, fully ninety out of the hundred on the other hand had renounced Protestantism for the faith of the former Church. It was truly an uninviting state of affairs, and one that embraced perils of the most assured kind, for well he knew how desperately and vindictively these priests would repel any attempt upon their stronghold.

It is true that in 1738 Whitefield had been in Ire-

land, and there for a few days had fearlessly and vehemently lifted up his voice for the new faith. It was while on his return from his first visit to Georgia. His vessel touched at the port of Limerick. There he had been hospitably received and encouraged to preach by Bishop Bircough. From Limerick he had passed on to Dublin, still under the protection of bishops and various other powerful prelates. But his visit had not seemed to arouse the people much. It doubtless created a greater sensation among the Protestants themselves than it did among the Catholics.

Certain it is that when John Wesley first looked upon this wretched country with the yearning eye of a devoted evangelist Protestantism was "feeble and waning;" and we cannot doubt, studying the case as it stood before his coming, and as he left it, that without him and his consecrated work, and that of his brother, Protestantism would in time have entirely disappeared from the island.

On August 9, 1747, John Wesley reached Dublin. That day he preached at St. Mary's cathedral to "as gay and careless a congregation" as he had ever been called upon to face. The curate of this charge treated him very politely, but when Wesley suggested a system of lay preaching whereby the people might be reached and enlightened more easily, he displayed an immovable prejudice. The archbishop also treated this suggestion as "an extraordinary novelty." Undismayed, however, by this opposition, Wesley at once began his own independent labors. On mak-

ing inquiries he was greatly surprised and pleased to learn that a lay preacher by the name of Thomas Williams had already founded a "society" in Dublin similar to those which the Methodists had formed in England, Wales, and elsewhere. This society contained nearly three hundred members. Wesley found them "strong in the faith," and was exceedingly rejoiced to come upon these heroes of the cross in the very midst of the enemy's stronghold.

The more Wesley studied the Irish people, their character and their ways, the more he became impressed with the cordial Irish spirit. He pronounced them the politest people under the sun, and began to entertain very pleasant doubts of the peril he had anticipated. Alas! he had as yet caught but one view of their many-sided character. The "roaring lion" was there as well as the docile lamb, as he was after awhile to learn too painfully.

On this first visit he preached constantly and without molestation at the chapel of Williams's society, which had been a Lutheran church. The house and the yard were continually thronged with hearers. Many times he had to preach out-of-doors, so as to give all a chance to hear him. And at these gatherings not only the poor people were present, but the wealthy ones as well. They continued to treat him with the greatest politeness, and to listen with the most rapt attention to what he had to say. Soon this "excessive cordiality" began to raise much uneasiness in Wesley's mind. "On this very account," he wrote, "they must be watched over with the more

care, being equally susceptible of good and ill impressions." He had rightly gauged them, and it was not long before he had unpleasantly witnessed just how very susceptible they could be to the ill impressions as well as the good.

On the 23d of August, having spent two weeks among these seemingly quiet and cordial people, and having preached a touching farewell discourse to an immense assembly, Wesley took passage for England.

Two weeks later Charles Wesley came over, accompanied by Charles Perronet, a son of the vicar of Shoreham, England. Prepared by the glowing accounts his brother had given him to meet a mild and cordial people, Charles Wesley was all the more shocked to learn of the violent and disgraceful scenes that had taken place during the past two weeks. The "roaring lion" had indeed broken forth, completely swallowing up all traces of the passive lamb. The mob had assembled almost upon Wesley's departure. Incited by the priests, they had entered the little chapel, torn up and destroyed its furniture, stealing what there was worth stealing, and afterward making a bonfire in the street of the seats, window-facings, doors, and pulpit. But their fiendish spirit did not stop here. After demolishing the chapel all they could, and destroying its contents, they set upon the members of the society, beating them with clubs and threatening to murder every one who returned to the chapel or the chapel-yard for worship. It was, in short, a typical Irish mob, "bristling with shillalahs, and triumphant with noise."

The Methodists appealed to the mayor. He felt disposed to protect them, but dared not in the face of the pressure brought to bear upon him from other directions. Even the grand jury threw out the bills made against the rioters. Charles Wesley was urged by his friends not to attempt to preach publicly in the present excited state of feeling. But he was not intimidated. Still, after considerable persuasion, he consented to meet the society privately. His mission in Dublin was soon discovered, however, and he was constantly subjected to all manner of indignities on the streets, and frequently to violence.

A short time previous to Wesley's coming, John Cennick, one of the Methodist lay preachers, had delivered a sermon in Dublin on "The babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes in a manger." A popish hearer, who knew little if any thing of the Bible, deemed this text a Protestant device to ridicule the infant Saviour, and so told the occurrence abroad. "Swaddler" soon grew into a by-word, and in a little while was firmly fixed upon the Methodists as a nickname. "Swaddler! Swaddler!" cried the people after Charles Wesley on the streets. Even the children shouted it, and tossed stones and lumps of mud by way of emphasizing it. More than one "long-range club" was shaken in his face; he felt the force of formidable shillalah upon head and shoulder; he was spit upon and pelted with every conceivable missile; but he stood it all with his usual fortitude, and, having his way, now preached daily in the most open manner upon the streets or in the parks. Many ter-

rible scenes were enacted. The mob scarcely ever gave over until some one had been killed. After a week of such preaching, Wesley, sick at heart, writes: “‘Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers,’ of which the city is full.”

Once a Methodist was knocked down, fearfully hacked with knives, and thrown into a cellar to die. Another was covered with the many stones that had been hurled upon him, while his blood trickled in crimson streams through the openings, staining all before it. Still another, a feeble man, was run over and then stamped upon until he died. In the very midst of one of Wesley’s sermons a woman was beaten to death before his eyes. Such scenes made his heart sick and his blood run cold. Nor was he himself beyond danger. He had many narrow escapes, the Lord wonderfully preserving him. Once a constable who was sent to defend him was struck down, kicked and dragged about until life was extinct, and then hanged in triumph, no one offering any interference. At another time young Perronet, who had interposed his person as a shield for Wesley, was struck and severely hurt.

But at last the power of the gospel subdued even these savage natures. There came a time when Charles Wesley stood on Dublin Green, preaching to an assembly whose tears and cries almost drowned his voice. It was one of the most impressive scenes in his whole experience. He continued after that to preach regularly once a day, and sometimes five times a day. He built a chapel, a far bet-

ter one than the old society had occupied. It was a happy and yet a solemn time as they came into it "out of great tribulation." Wesley preached to them a most comforting sermon of Him who would in his own good time "wipe all tears from their eyes."

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THE BATTLE SPREADING.

IN the meantime, several preachers had been sent into the country. Soon there was the glad news of glorious awakenings at many places.

Charles Wesley went from Dublin into the interior. At every opportunity along the way he stopped to sow some seed of the Master's word—a little here, a little there—breathing out upon each as it fell the consecration of fervent prayer, and leaving all to mature in the sunshine of hope and faith. His heart was peculiarly touched by one thing on this journey: on every side he heard the loved old Methodist hymns and tunes sung and whistled by the Irish children. Even at that early day in his career the Irish love of song and music was serving the evangelist a helpful turn. Hundreds were thus touched and won over who otherwise would have remained stubborn and unyielding. An ardent poet and lover of music himself, it warmed Charles Wesley's heart inexpressibly to hear his own compositions passing so musically from mouth to mouth. Many stirring scenes occurred. Dangers were everywhere present, persecutions arose in every conceivable form, but from end to end of the Christian battle-line not a soldier faltered.

At Wexford a ridiculous yet thrilling scene took place. It had been given out that Charles Wesley would preach that day in a barn near the town. A plot was at once inaugurated for the destruction of the barn while the meeting was in progress, and for scattering and belaboring the people. With a view to the success of the plot, the leader hid himself in a sack inside the barn, so as to be able to give his accomplices the signal at the proper time. When the singing began, so deep in its melody, so rich in its pathos, a wonderful thing happened. The man in the sack was so profoundly touched that he lost all consciousness of his surroundings and began to sway to and fro, keeping time to the music. At last, under the prayer, which was most powerful and soul-reaching, he roared out with remorse and conviction, trembling so that the sack shook as if there had been an earthquake within. At first the people were greatly frightened, believing that Satan was in the sack, but finally it was pulled off, when, lo! there stood a weeping, crouching, praying creature, pleading with them to save him from eternal damnation. Conversion soon followed conviction. It proved to be one of the soundest awakenings in all Wesley's experience.

At Tyrrell Pass the whole town assembled to hear Wesley. "Never," he writes, "have I spoken to hungrier souls. They devoured every word. Some expressed their satisfaction in a way peculiar to them, and *whistled* for joy. Few such feasts have I had since I left England. It refreshed my body more

than meat or drink. God has begun a great work here."

At Athlone a furious mob, stirred up by the Catholic priests, awaited him. Stones were thrown, clubs were swung, and fierce howls rent the air. One of Wesley's companions was knocked from his horse, trampled upon, and nearly killed. Many Protestants turned out in favor of the Methodists. The result was a fierce collision, which soon grew so serious that the dragoons had to be called out. This, instead of quelling the riot, seemed only to increase it; but without a tremor Wesley walked through the violently agitated mass to the market-house, where he intended to preach. However, finding that the building would not accommodate a third of his hearers, he took his stand in an open window and discoursed to the multitude below. Some violence was attempted, but soon a hush fell upon all. The sermon was one of unusual power and fervor, seeming to penetrate to many hearts with wonderful effect. There were loud cries for mercy, deep groans of conviction, and more than one sincere conversion.

At Moat the scenes were deeply affecting. Hearts were stirred as they had never been stirred before. But the usual mob was there, hurling stones, brandishing shillalahs, and knocking down those who attempted to press up nearer the preacher. Several large drums and one or two trumpets were also brought out with the hope of drowning his voice and forcing him from the scene; but the courageous servant of God kept his place through all the tumult.

Journeying on to Phillipstown, he encountered a scene calculated to arouse enthusiasm in the most dejected heart. He was met by a party of dragoons, who had all been turned "from darkness into light" through the power of Methodism. They had formed themselves into a society, and were meeting regularly three times a week in earnest, helpful service.

On his return journey to Dublin, Charles Wesley everywhere met with the blessings of hundreds of those whom his words had led to the light of the only true salvation—through Jesus, the Saviour. He found the society at Dublin considerably increased in numbers and greatly strengthened in faith by the glowing reports that had come to them from various parts of the battle-field now so broadly extending.

John Wesley came for his second visit to Dublin on March 8, 1748. He had with him one of his regular helpers named Meriton, and Robert Swindells, a lay preacher. He entered the new chapel on Cork street just as his brother was in the midst of his sermon. Great was the people's joy on seeing him. Later, when he attempted to speak, his voice could scarcely be heard, so great was the noise of those praising and blessing God for his return. He preached daily in Dublin, both in the chapel and on the green. His first sermon began at five o'clock. At the opening there was great opposition to this unusual hour for holding public worship; but he remained firm against attacks and persuasions alike. It must often have appealed very strongly to his humorous side to see the pictures presented by some of

these half-dressed, half-awake, yawning, nodding worshipers at the early morning services. But in proportion as their zeal and earnestness increased their dilatory habits received a spur, until soon the most exacting preacher could not have complained of the wide-awake, attentive audiences that greeted Wesley in the early morning light on the Dublin Green.

Following the example of his brother, John Wesley also left Dublin and began to travel from place to place. At Phillipstown there was a memorable scene as he confirmed the party of converted dragoons; at Clara a remarkable one as he stood preaching to hundreds of the rich gentry seated within their coaches. At Athlone, he was deeply affected at the sight which greeted him as from the same window of the market-place in which his brother had stood he discoursed to a congregation that swayed from side to side like the waves of a troubled sea. On his return, however, he had a different scene at this place. Just as the people had assembled to hear him preach, the priests came and "drove them away before them like a flock of sheep." Undismayed by this event, Wesley preached in the evening on "The terrors of the law" in the "strongest manner he was able." Either the priests had not found out about this second meeting or the people had gotten over their fear of the morning and were determined to stand their ground. At any rate, they stood and heard him through, visibly affected. While they seemed literally to devour every word, yet, from

the knowledge that experience had given him of the Irish character, Wesley was much "afraid that very few of his words were properly digested." Still he describes them as "an immeasurably loving people," and when he left there was such a falling of tears as he had never witnessed on a similar occasion. It is true that they might have been only "the drops before the shower," but surely the rain would fall in rich abundance after awhile.

At Tullamore the people stood in the midst of a rain-storm unmoved, listening to his words of exhortation. As a mark of respect they stood with their heads uncovered, nor could all his persuasions induce them to protect their heads against the fall of the hail-stones.

After spending three months in Ireland, Wesley returned to England. At the end of two months more his brother came again to Dublin. He found the society there still on the increase. At Cork wonderful success had crowned the efforts of the lay preachers left there. He began preaching in fields and on the streets to crowds of hearers. Several times his audience numbered as many as ten thousand, Papists as well as Protestants. Even the clergy of the city flocked to hear him. When he preached in a building the altars were constantly crowded with those who had been among the bitterest persecutors of the little society of Methodists. Methodism had indeed entered Ireland "never to be overthrown there." The battle had been stormy and wide-spread, but before such brave, persistent fighting as that done by

her soldiers many of the enemy's strongest outposts had been successfully stormed and carried. But the conflict had by no means subsided, as we shall soon see.

* * *

THE STORM AT CORK.

WONDERFUL as was the success of his efforts at Dublin, Charles Wesley nevertheless experienced a feeling of uneasiness. He knew the Irish nature too well by this time—in short, human nature as he had seen it elsewhere—to believe that this feeling of hearty good-will, of quick, impetuous conviction, could long remain firm under other and different influences. He therefore kept close watch for genuine conversions, and as soon as such converts were brought into the society he began to prepare them for the outbreak which he feared would follow. It was well he did, for scarcely had he turned his back upon Cork when the storm burst. The trouble came through one Butler, a ballad-singer, who also pretended to be a clergyman. Arraying himself in a clerical gown, with the Bible in one hand and his ballads in the other, he went through the streets denouncing the Methodists, and everywhere stirring up the people to violence against them. He declared them veritable monsters, wolves in disguise, who as soon as they attained to power would not hesitate to show their teeth. The people became so excited that they armed themselves with swords, clubs, and weapons of every description, and began to fall upon the hapless Methodists without mercy. Men, women, and

children were knocked down in the streets and trampled upon. Some were shockingly mutilated or dangerously wounded by sword thrusts. Their houses were assailed and many of them entirely demolished. Furniture was broken up, clothing torn into shreds, and bonfires made of the most valuable articles. One of the members, who was a merchant of position and property, applied to the authorities for protection and the apprehension and punishment of the rioters. He only had his trouble for his pains. Another member, even while they were pulling down his house and destroying his furniture, ran to the mayor and bade him come quickly to the spot and see for himself. But the mayor's only action after he got there was to cry out to the persecuted Methodists: "It is your own fault for entertaining the preachers; if you will turn them out of your houses, I will engage that no harm shall be done, but if you will not you must take the consequences."

Fired by this cowardly answer, one of the Methodists retorted that this was a very extraordinary mode of proceeding on the part of a Protestant government; that he was well assured that if at that moment the Methodists had a Catholic priest saying mass in every room of their houses not one would be touched. To this the mayor made the outrageous retort that "the priests were protected, but the Methodists were not." Hearing this, the crowd approved by a wild hurraing and a heavier shower of stones than ever, while the destruction of the house and its contents was completed right under the mayor's eyes.

This weak and cowardly conduct on the part of the authorities seemed all the more to encourage the mob. Indeed, they looked upon it as an unmistakable encouragement of their course, and were more fierce and reckless than ever in committing outrages. Butler now showed himself everywhere. He ranged the streets, still armed with his ballads and the Bible. He stood on the corners surrounded by drunken crowds, shouting, "Five pounds for the head of a Swaddler!"

The Methodists and their friends endeavored to have Butler and his lawless vagabonds indicted by the grand jury, but without avail. No less than twenty-eight depositions were made out and verified by scores of witnesses, all of them persons of the highest standing; but every one of these depositions was thrown out, and in its stead was "a remarkable presentment" made by this same grand jury, which to this day stands a foul blot upon the city records. Well might John Wesley pronounce this document "worthy to be preserved in the annals of Ireland throughout all succeeding generations," since it read as follows: "We find and present Charles Wesley to be a person of ill-fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of His Majesty's peace, and we pray that he may be transported."

Charles Wesley was safe in London when this remarkable judgment of his character was rendered by these "enlightened Hibernians." Nine others were indicted with him, eight of them preachers, and one whose only crime had consisted in hospitably enter-

taining these preachers at his home. Butler and his vagabond crew were jubilant over this indictment, but they soon began to feel differently in the light of what followed. At the Lent assize of the King's Court all the preachers who were in the kingdom banded together and presented themselves before this high tribunal, asking a just and thorough examination of the charges on both sides. They had now to deal with the king's own magistrates, who conducted matters upon altogether a different plan from the corrupt grand jury at Cork.

Butler was the first witness examined. "What is your calling?" was sternly asked him. "I sing ballads," was the answer after some hesitation. "Here," exclaimed the judge, indignantly lifting his hands, "here are six gentlemen indicted as vagabonds, and the first accuser is a vagabond by profession!" The next witness said he was "an anti-Swaddler," and altogether treated this august body with such downright disrespect that he was ordered away and fined for contempt of court. The preachers were triumphantly acquitted, but the reign of Butler and his fiendish disciples was not yet over.

On coming to Cork in 1750 John Wesley was subjected to the greatest violence. More than once the preservation of his life seemed little less than a miracle. While he was preaching in the chapel on one occasion the furniture, windows, and floor were torn out and a bonfire made of them in the streets. Several in the congregation were knocked down and badly hurt. Men, women, and children were tram-

pled underfoot, and Wesley himself was severely bruised.

He went from Cork to Bandon to preach. The mob followed him. They went in a motley, disorderly procession, hooting and yelling like mad creatures. But the worst they did there was to hang Wesley in effigy. The disgraceful and violent scenes at Cork continued unabated for over a week. Under the very gaze of the mayor and his subordinates they marched about the streets with angry shouts and menaces. They attacked and demolished houses; they assaulted innocent people; they even had the audacity to post up notices, with the mayor's name attached, advising assaults on certain citizens and the destruction of their houses. "Down with the Swaddlers!" read these bills, "and with all citizens who dare entertain them and their preachers!"

But a power soon arose on the side of the Methodists—the only power, perhaps, of which these lawless mobs stood really in dread—the military. Under the Methodist preaching scores of stanch, bold soldiers soon became converts. It did not take them long to show the determination with which they intended to defend the helpless people so long and so shamefully abused by both the civil authorities and the uncivil rabble. Under the point of the bayonet or the flash of the sword the mob slunk away nerveless and cowed.

As to Butler, he met the miserable end he deserved. In a riot at Waterford he got into a quarrel with some of his associates. It soon merged into a regular hand-to-hand fight, in which Butler lost an

arm. He lingered on for a few years in poverty and suffering, shunned by all respectable people, and at last died a hopeless death.

Meanwhile, however, Methodism grew and flourished in Cork. In but few places in hapless Ireland did it take so permanent a root. A handsome and spacious chapel was erected, and the society grew to such proportions that other buildings became necessary. As the Methodists had been "reviled for the name of Christ," so at last "the spirit of glory and of God rested upon them," and many were "the living and dying witnesses of the power of true religion.'

Only a year or so later, on a subsequent visit to Cork, Wesley was entertained by the mayor at his mansion-house, and his presence was considered "a high honor to the city." So do times change and people change with them. So does that which is true and pure and steadfast win its recognition as surely as the water trickling drop by drop wears the hardest crust away.

* * *

THE DEAF-MUTE CONVERTED.

ONE of the most remarkable conversions that greeted the Methodists in Ireland was that of the deaf-mute at Antrim. He was truly a vicious character—hardened, revengeful, and dangerous when aroused. From his youth up to his twenty-sixth year he had followed with a reckless abandon after the most notorious of the vices—cock-fighting, horse-racing, gambling, drunkenness, and the like. It was not known

when the power of God began to make itself felt within the darkened chambers of his heart. Conscience had doubtless been at work for some time before he began to attend the meetings of the Methodists. He could not hear a word that was uttered, but his eyes could follow every expression of the preacher's face, every gesture of the hand or movement of the lips. He could also see the working faces of other persons, tears streaming from their eyes, their hands clasped in earnest supplication to God. He was compelled to *feel*, though he could not hear. God alone knew the workings of that darkened, imprisoned soul, unable to communicate intelligently with others, unable to receive communications intelligently from them. But his conversion was none the less thorough and genuine; and soon he learned to hold communication with those about him—to tell them his weaknesses, doubts, and needs, and to receive from them strength and enlightenment. He became one of the most upright citizens and a devoted member of the society. He quit all his vices, refused to work on Sunday, and even on any day at any thing the least questionable. Unable to speak to his fellow-men and exhort them to a better way of living, he let his life speak for him, which after all was more effective than the most powerful sermon. When one of the preachers was expected in the town he went from house to house summoning the people to the services, so afraid was he that some might fail to attend. When converted he could not read, but afterward, through the devotedness of his brethren in

the society, he learned by heart many of the precious truths of the Bible, and was able to find their place upon the page.

It was one of the most thrilling and pathetic scenes in all Methodist history to see this man eagerly snatch up the sacred volume, and, standing before those who had not yet learned "the way, the truth, the life," point to the text with a "wild, screaming voice," while he besought them with eyes that shed "floods of tears." It was enough. A hundred sermons could not have said more.

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THOMAS WALSH, THE IRISH APOSTLE.

WE have seen that when Wesley made his second visit to Ireland, in 1748, he had with him in addition to Meriton, one of his regular helpers, a young lay preacher by the name of Robert Swindells. The latter remained for some time in Ireland, faithful, efficient, and devoted to his work. He preached in all sorts of places and to all sorts of audiences.

In 1749 Swindells went to Limerick, and preached there daily upon the parade-ground. On one occasion there stood listening to him a pale-faced, sad-looking young man who seemed to be drinking in deeply every word that the preacher uttered. This young man was named Thomas Walsh. He had been reared a strict Roman Catholic, but, disgusted with many of the doctrines and practices of popery, had at last openly revolted—not against religion itself, however, but against the form of it as he had

seen it practiced in this Church. Previous to this time he had been in a terrible state. "The arrows of the Almighty," he says, "stuck fast in me, and my very bones trembled because of my sins." He longed for religious comfort, for knowledge, for a faith that would hold his soul secure above all alarms. Nowhere within the teachings of this Church had he been able to find such comfort, such faith. Nor could her priests help him; they seemed as much in the dark concerning his state as he was himself. He confessed to them; he poured out before them the whole burden of his soul. The only consolation they could give was the recommendation of many prayers and of rigorous penances. He tried them. He fasted; he prayed incessantly; he called upon God, the saints, the angels, the Holy Virgin to hear him; he lay upon the ground, throwing himself from side to side and tearing his hair in his agony. Finding no relief, he grew reckless and tried to seek forgetfulness in various amusements. His torture only increased. "A hell," he says, "opened in my heart." He came back to his old fastings, prayers, and penances. He made an austere record of his failings and his sins. St. Augustine himself could scarcely have equaled him in his startling candor and rigid flaying of self. Yet he says he was still as one "that beateth the air." And why? Because he had so far had no Bible to shed light upon the way—no honest, fearless minister of God to set his feet in the right path. But at length, when eighteen years of age, one of the precious books came into his hands, and for the first

time a ray of the true light fell upon his way. He renounced the Catholic faith and attached himself to that of the Established Church. But still he was not satisfied. No comfort, no assured hope had as yet come. "There was no rest in my bones," he says, "by reason of my sins."

It was in something of this state of mind that, attracted by the novelty of the scene, he had joined the crowd that pressed up around Swindells on the parade-ground. He fastened his eyes with eager scrutiny upon the preacher's pale and earnest face, hoping, longing to hear him say something that would bring some light and hope and gladness out of the sore tumult within. The words were spoken, almost from the beginning, for Swindells's text was: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

It is not our purpose to follow Walsh through all the fierce conflict born of this first real awakening to consciousness of his condition. Like a shaft winged by the Almighty hand the truth had buried itself at last within his heart, "not his guilt only, but the all-sufficiency of Christ." It was not merely a repentance of sin that was necessary to salvation, but a full and free acceptance of Christ. How had he missed it all along, and it so simple? A little later, at a Methodist meeting in New Market, the glorious and unmistakable transformation of the new birth came. It was a conversion in full keeping with his ardent Irish temperament. "I was divinely assured," he says, "that God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all

my sins; the Spirit of God bore witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. I broke out into tears of joy and love."

From that time forth his life, in the language of Robert Southey, was such as "might indeed almost convince a Catholic that saints are to be found in other communions as well as the Church of Rome." He became one of the most zealous and devoted of the lay ministry in Ireland, and no man of those heroic times bore the brunt of the battle more gloriously than he, nor were there any readier "to suffer or die for Christ's sake."

Entering the ministry with awe and reverence for the holiness of the calling, his constant prayer was, "Lord Jesus, be thou my sun and star." He walked thirty miles to keep his first appointment, which was in a barn, and was greeted by an audience which treated him to the incongruous mixture of "contradictions, mockery, and tears." He stood his ground faithfully, and preached with such power and pathos that the contradictions and mockery were soon all swallowed up by the tears. He returned to Limerick, and preached there for some weeks with such force and fervor that those awakened through his words could not be induced to leave the spot until they had found peace for their tortured souls. He passed "as a flame of fire" through Leinster and Connaught, preaching twice and sometimes thrice a day, generally in the open air, for soon no house could hold his congregations.

His knowledge of the Irish language and the readi-

ness with which the words came to him gave him an almost extraordinary advantage, for "it is an old maxim in Ireland," says Southey, "'When you plead for your life, plead in Irish.'" But as musical and pathetic as is the language when thus applied, it has a still more "peculiarly affecting expressiveness" when used in reference to God and sacred things. And Thomas Walsh knew how to take advantage of this expressiveness to its fullest extent. Especially astonishing was his work among the Papists. They came in wonder-struck crowds to hear this amazing story of a loving and forgiving Saviour told in their own deep-reaching and musical language. As it was revealed to them word by word, they would smite their breasts, while floods of tears rolled down their cheeks. Again, the old habits and instincts strong within them, they would invoke the Virgin Mary, and in voices shaken with sobs declare that they would follow him as a saint all over the world. Even the miserable beggars in the streets, under the overwhelming sweetness and pathos of his words, would clasp their hands imploringly together, and kneeling before him pray and weep. Never had there been such scenes in Ireland, not even under the preaching of Whitefield or the Wesleys.

A Romanist, who had for years been laying aside his earnings so that he might pay them over to the priest on his death-bed, and thus have his soul prayed out of purgatory, came to Walsh and besought him to take the money and make the prayers he had intended the priests to make for his soul's safe passage

into paradise. "No man can forgive your sins," said the faithful Walsh; "the gift of God cannot be purchased with money; only the blood of Christ can cleanse from sin." Greatly astonished by what he heard, the poor Romanist fell upon his knees and besought Walsh to show him how he was to obtain this precious cleansing. Kneeling at his side, Walsh prayed for him with all the deep ardor of his Irish nature. He was most soundly converted.

At another time a native, with whom he remonstrated in English for some unbecoming deed, at the same time warning him of the wrath to come, swore to kill him. Thereupon Walsh began earnestly and feelingly to reprove him in Irish. "Why didst thou not speak so to me at the beginning?" cried the excited man. In a little while "the lion had become a lamb," as the wonderful preacher "let him know in Irish what Christ had done for sinners." He soon departed with "a broken heart."

Alarmed at the great success of Walsh, the Romish priests incited mobs against him. He had many and thrilling escapes. Once on his way to Rosscrea he was attacked by a party of seventy-eight men, all armed with clubs. They, however, proposed that if he would allow them to bring a clergyman of the Established Church and a priest of Rome to convert him to either faith he might choose after hearing the arguments on each side, they would let him go; but if he did not they would kill him on the spot. He refused, whereupon they still hesitated, and proposed that if he would swear never to come to Rosscrea

again to preach they would turn him loose. He fearlessly replied that he would far rather suffer martyrdom than give such a pledge. They now hurried him away, "raging like wild beasts," with the determination of drowning him in a well near by. But his calm, intrepid bearing so won upon the admiration of a few of the better disposed of them that by the time the well was reached the sentiment of the party was about equally divided between throwing him into the well and allowing him to escape. While they wrangled and argued, the parish minister interfered and bore him away to the inn.

He had no sooner reached the inn than the crowd collected again, and seizing him carried him into the streets. It being market-day, he boldly took his stand at a corner of the square and began to preach. But the mob laid violent hands upon him once more, vowing to put him out of the way if he did not desist. They hastened with him away from the town. Finally, through the kindly offices of a friend who followed him, he managed to get upon his horse. Taking off his hat, he prayed for them with such pathos and fervor, and at its conclusion exhorted them with such persuasion and feeling, as to melt many to tears. He was then allowed to make his way out undisturbed. They often tried to conquer him in similar ways, but he came off victor as on this first occasion, "in peace of conscience and serenity of mind." Through his efforts Methodism was at last firmly established at Rosscreea.

At Cork the magistrate had him arrested and

thrown into prison for preaching. The whole town seemed "moved in his behalf," for his name had become a household word throughout Ireland. Many persons followed him to the prison and stood without, singing hymns, while in the interval he exhorted them. Bedding and provisions were sent to him, and crowds daily gathered about his prison window in defiance of the magistrates. He preached to them continually, though often the multitude was so great that his voice could not reach to the center of them.

But the Papists were not his only persecutors; from communicants of the other churches he met with many indignities, often with violence. In the north of Ireland he was once so severely handled by Protestants that for several weeks he lay at death's door with a fever that he had contracted through exposures to which his Christian (?) tormentors had subjected him. Many unkind stories were told regarding him; scandal of every sort was freely circulated. At Clonmel the priest told his congregation from the pulpit that Walsh had been a servant-boy to a certain priest; that he had stolen his master's books, and thus learned to preach. Another declared that the real Walsh was dead, and that this man was the devil in his shape. Not heeding these falsehoods and slanders, he kept bravely and faithfully on his way, giving to the Master and his cause "the fullness and the energy of a glowing soul." "Never," declared Wesley, "have I known a preacher who, in so few years as he remained upon earth, was an instrument for converting so many sinners."

He literally wore himself out. For nine years, under such mental and physical suffering as would have completely broken down a less resolute and devoted man, he kept up his wonderful work. In 1758 he was "just alive," yet he continued to preach twice and often thrice a day, besides constantly visiting the poor, the sick, and the dying. Truly, if ever a saint in earthly form was allowed to take up its dwelling-place among men, that saint was Thomas Walsh. Wesley himself, earnest, devoted, his heart aglow with the purest fires of Christian consecration, yet looked upon Walsh with "wonder and reverence." He appeared to be always in prayer or in solemn communion with God. "In sleep itself," says Wesley, "to my certain knowledge his soul went out in groans and sighs and tears to God. His heart, having attained such a tendency to its Lord, could only give over when it ceased to beat." He seemed constantly "absorbed in God," and often his transfigured face gave eloquent expression to what was passing within. His last words were: "He is come! He is come! My beloved is mine, and I am his forever!" He died at the age of twenty-eight, after having been eight years in the Methodist ministry.



METHODISM'S FIRST MARTYR IN IRELAND.

AMONG the leading Methodist preachers in Ireland was John McBurney. He was faithful, courageous, and untiring. No mob, however violent, could frighten him from his duty. Even blows and the fiercest

of persecutions did not turn him from his course. He had a regular circuit, but often deviated from it to preach at other places.

Once he went to Clones, and gathering a crowd about him in the market-place, he began earnestly to exhort them. The crowd continued to increase. Soon it had assumed such proportions that the Papists, greatly alarmed, went away and gathered a rabble. Returning, they so persecuted the assembly that for a time it seemed that McBurney's hearers would be obliged to give way and either take to flight or stand and battle for their lives. Some went for a magistrate, hoping to get him to interfere; but being a weak, cowardly man, he dared not.

Just at the moment when a crisis seemed imminent a singular incident took place. Looking on with much interest at the worshipers, and paying close attention to the preacher, was an old, gray-haired soldier with a tall, erect figure and a very determined air. Seeing the state of affairs, he went away, procured a musket, and returning placed himself beside a tree on the outskirts of the crowd that stood listening to McBurney. Here, with his gun threateningly raised, he declared with an oath that he would instantly shoot down the first man who attempted to pass for the purpose of interfering with the meeting. He was a Scotchman—a man really wicked in his own habits, but with very high notions of the respect due religious worship, and with the courage to uphold his convictions even in the face of such a mob as this. This bold action had the desired effect upon

the cowardly rabble, for, after the old soldier had taken his stand by the tree, not one attempted to reach the proscribed ground beyond. Nor was this the last time that he defended McBurney and his congregation from their craven assaulters. At every visit of the preacher for weeks thereafter he mounted guard over the assembly, standing by the tree, gun in hand, and with his eagle eye fixed warningly upon the cowed rabble.

But alas! McBurney could not be so bravely protected everywhere he preached, and the beaten and angered mob, thwarted in their designs upon him here, determined to seek their revenge elsewhere. Accordingly, on one of his itinerant journeys they followed him to the neighboring village of Enniskillen. The Methodists had a chapel there, and while they were assembled within, listening to the words of the preacher, the mob, armed with stones and clubs, made an assault upon the place. Breaking off the doors and windows they rushed in, and, violently dragging out the men, women, and children, set upon the defenseless preacher. He was knocked down, beaten, and pulled about until he was supposed to be dead. But he was not dead; and on regaining consciousness and attempting to rise, he was again knocked down, while one ruffianly fellow put his foot upon his face, declaring with horrible blasphemy that he would "tread the Holy Ghost out of him before he stopped." "May God forgive you," said the poor sufferer as soon as he could speak; "I do, as God knows." What man but a Christian could

have made such a reply as this under the circumstances?

After this ferocious beating, his poor bruised and broken body was placed upon a horse, while one of the ruffians got up behind and began to belabor the horse unmercifully, starting him upon a wild gallop down the mountain, and managing to drop off just as the horse bounded forth with the maimed and half-dead preacher fastened to his back. At the base of the mountain the animal was stopped by some travelers and the preacher rescued.

Unmindful of the serious injuries he had received, McBurney continued preaching as long as he could drag himself to his appointments. He looked upon it as matter for the greatest rejoicing that he, a lowly servant of the great Master, had been accounted worthy to suffer for his sake. Not long after this brutal treatment at Enniskillen, he died from the effect of his hurts—the first martyr of Methodism in Ireland, as Thomas Beard had been in England.



WHITEFIELD AT OXMANTOWN GREEN.

It was during Whitefield's second visit to Ireland, in the summer of 1751, that he determined to preach at Oxmantown Green, then a large open ground near the royal barracks at Dublin. This green was the regular Sunday resort of two factions of the lowest class of the people—one known as "The Ormond Boys" and the other as "The Liberty Boys." Here they met for the purpose of fighting with each other

and to engage in various rough contests, such as leaping, boxing, tumbling, and the like. Many of the scenes enacted on such occasions would have put to the blush even some of those at Moorfields.

When Whitefield made known his intention to preach at this spot his friends endeavored to dissuade him, feeling assured that he would either be killed or seriously injured. But he was resolute. Greatly to the surprise of all, his first sermon at Oxmantown passed off without disturbance of any kind. The preaching seemed to make a deep impression, many in the audience giving signs of sincere conviction. A far different scene awaited him, however, on the occasion of his second sermon.

After giving due notice of his intention to preach there again on the following Sunday, Whitefield at the hour appointed took his way through the door of the barracks, which stood wide open, and thence on to the green. Taking his stand near the barracks wall, he began to preach. He felt much security in the presence of the soldiers, not doubting that should he be assaulted in any way they would give him their protection. During the singing, the prayer, and the sermon that followed, Whitefield was unmolested save for a few stones and clods of dirt with which he was every now and then pelted. Such a course of action was quite unusual on the part of so large a multitude, and considering its disorderly behavior in other respects. But the mob itself had no spite against the preacher, nor any desire to do him real hurt. There were others at hand, however, with no such good-

natured feelings. In truth, a danger threatened—a danger far more menacing than any which the bold preacher, with all his thrilling experiences, had yet been called upon to face. But, in utter ignorance of it, he kept on with his discourse.

As the country was then at war, and soldiers were constantly marching away or coming in, Whitefield took occasion not only to exhort his hearers to fear God and seek a new life, so as to be prepared to meet death calmly at any moment, but he also exhorted them to be loyal to the king, ending the services by praying fervently for the monarch. When he had concluded he tried to make his way out through the door by which he had entered, but greatly to his surprise the passage was denied him. He found that he would have to pass from one end of the green to the other before he could get outside the walls. On turning, with that purpose, he was considerably startled to see drawn up in solid ranks before him thousands of Roman Catholics. He now understood what the arrangement between them and the soldiers had been. They partly opened, as if to allow him to pass. With a prayer to God for succor, he threw himself boldly into their midst. They closed in about him. They threw volleys of stones; they clutched at his clothing; they spat upon him; they cursed him with the most dreadful oaths. Backward and forward he reeled, panting for breath and covered with blood. How he ever came forth from that fiendish rabble without mortal hurt only his watchful Master knew. But he did get through at last, and

staggering to the door of a minister's house, which stood near the green, he had just strength enough left to pull the knocker when he fell exhausted upon the steps. After he was taken in he continued many minutes speechless and panting for breath. He was soon surrounded by weeping friends, who fully believed they had come to look their last upon him. But after they had given him a cordial and washed his wounds, they found that with the exception of one large gash near his temple, the injuries were not so serious as they appeared to be. A coach was procured and he was carried home. The Catholics had not yet dispersed. When they found out who was in the coach they followed it for some distance with fierce oaths and maledictions. But the presence of Whitefield's friends—some of them among the most influential citizens of Dublin—saved him from further violence. Reaching his lodging in safety, he joined with his friends in a hymn of thanksgiving for his deliverance.

In writing of this fearful experience to a friend, Whitefield said: "I received many blows and wounds; one was particularly large, and near the temple. I thought of Stephen, and was in hopes like him to go off in this bloody triumph to the immediate presence of my Master." Whitefield often used to push back his wig to show this wound to the little children whom he coaxed to his knee with the promise to tell them of that memorable Sunday at Oxmantown Green. To one little girl in Virginia, who never forgot it to the day of her death, he said: "Come here,

my little girl, and put your finger in that gash where the brickbat hit me. That is the scar I bear for my Master."



DUNCAN WRIGHT AND THE CONDEMNED YOUTH.

AMONG the soldiers in Ireland, Methodism had no braver representative than Duncan Wright, a Scotchman. Since childhood he had shown a "bookish inclination," often reading and weeping until his head ached—wishing and longing to be a Christian, but "not knowing how." At eighteen he enlisted in the army, with the hope of seeing some of the world and thus "easing his heart." The next year he was in camp at Cashel, in Ireland, and seemingly altogether taken up with the bustling life of a soldier. But do what he would he could not escape his religious convictions. One day a Methodist corporal preached to the troops. Wright's soul was stirred. At Limerick the Methodist soldiers "disturbed his conscience." He at last attended the Methodist society in that place. He was so deeply impressed that he sought in private the conversation and guidance of its members. At last, on "a wakeful, weeping night," the Lord brought him "in an instant out of darkness into his marvellous light."

With his conversion came the conviction that he ought to preach to his comrades. But for two years he resisted the impression, though the Voice left not his heart day nor night. At length a tragic event showed him plainly that he ought no longer to resist his duty.

Desertions had of late become so frequent in the army that the Government, in order to frighten future offenders, determined to shoot a deserter in every city in Ireland. Among the condemned was a youth, just twenty years of age, in Duncan's own regiment. Forgetting his timidity for a time, and not caring that the guards surrounded the condemned, the earnest young Scotchman hastened to speak words of encouragement and consolation. He found the luckless youth "weeping as if his heart would break," and intently reading, "The Whole Duty of Man"—like a drowning man, in his extremity catching desperately at a straw. Making a brave effort, Wright spoke a few words of Christian cheer, and despite the gaping mouths of the guards besought him to look alone for help to Christ Jesus, the pitiful and loving, the Saviour of *all*. Wright visited him again in the evening, and though there were many soldiers looking on, as at the other meeting, still the young exhorter bravely entreated him to accept this Saviour while there was yet time, closing with a fervent prayer in his behalf. The poor young man at last saw himself an undone sinner, only to be saved through the precious blood of Him who had been slain. During the four days previous to his execution Wright visited him twice and sometimes thrice a day, exhorting and praying. The youth was most happily converted, and expressed no further fear of death. Those who saw him go to his execution were struck with the "serene joy" that sat upon his countenance. He said but little, only ask-

ing for ten minutes in which to pray. The soldiers detailed to fire the fatal shots could not help but remark upon his calm and fearless bearing, in so great a contrast to that of one they had seen die shortly before at Dublin under similar circumstances. The latter had shown the most craven fear, pitifully protesting that he could not die, the officer of the day being obliged to ride up to him several times and tell him he *must* die. But this intrepid youth was not upon his knees more than five or six minutes, when he arose, calmly faced his executioners, and, "dropping the signal, went to paradise."

Duncan Wright could no longer hesitate as to his duty. The death of this young man had forcibly shown him the influence he might have among his comrades. Every night after roll-call he held a meeting at his quarters. He never lacked for a large and attentive audience. A Methodist class was soon formed. At first he only sung and prayed with them, but their need growing greater, he was finally obliged to lay aside his hymn-book and exhort them. He thus became known as "The Camp Preacher."

Moving on with his regiment, he was the first preacher in Galway, where he firmly planted Methodism. The same results followed him at Dublin, "many seals to his ministry" being given him in that city. His colonel tried to stop his preaching but could not, and was at last glad to get him out of the army. "Thus it was," says Wright, "that the Lord thrust me into the harvest." At Waterford,

where a great revival took place not long afterward, he was one of the most zealous and successful of the ministers. Wesley at last sent him out as a regular traveling preacher. He gave thirty active, tireless years to the ministry, and died in triumph at his post.



EDINBURGH CASTLE.

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IN SCOTLAND.

SOWING THE SEED.

THE first of the Methodist evangelists to penetrate into rugged Scotland was George Whitefield. This was in the summer of 1741, some three or four months after his return from America.

The state of religion—that is, of pure, heart-felt religion—in the country at this time was truly depressing. The fearless preaching of Knox, and the truths he proclaimed, had almost become as a dream or as a “tale that is told.” Faithless, indeed, had these sturdy Highlanders proved to the covenant of their fathers. The churches still remained, it is true, and the clergymen; but the state of the one was coldness, barrenness, and decay; of the other, indifference. Cold, formal addresses had long since taken the place of earnest and impassioned exhortation. And though a few “faithful witnesses for God” yet remained in Scotland—notably among them the brothers Erskine in the Secession Church—still, by far the greater number of the people knew not God; or, knowing him by name only, they were “strangers to the life-giving influence and power of the gospel.” But a better day was already beginning to dawn.

On Whitefield's arrival, in 1741, he found that much effort to reform this deplorable condition of

affairs had been made by one of the few faithful ministers that yet remained, the Rev. Mr. McCulloch. For nearly a year this excellent man had been pleading with his people for a purer and deeper state of religion. Soon his preaching attracted such crowds that his church would not hold them, and he was now preaching in a grove on the grounds. Mr. McCulloch not unfrequently after his sermons gave his hearers the wonderful accounts of Whitefield's astonishing success both in England and America. So, when the announcement was made that he was coming over to preach to them, their curiosity to see and hear a man of such extraordinary gifts was unbounded and irrepressible.

Whitefield reached Edinburgh on July 30, 1741. He proceeded at once to the home of the brothers Erskine, at Dunfermline, where, in their meeting-house, he preached his first sermon in Scotland. The throng was so great that many were turned away unable to gain an entrance. "After I had done my prayers and named my text," says Whitefield, "the rustling made by opening the Bibles all at once quite surprised me—a scene I never was witness to before." Coming so unexpectedly, it disconcerted him no little to have so many eyes following with him the words as he read; but he soon became used to it.

The next day in Edinburgh he preached in the orphan-house to a large assembly. His text was, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." A visible impression was made. At the close many

crowded around him to thank and encourage him, among them a number of the nobility. A prominent Quaker, taking him by the hand, said: "Friend George, I am as thou art; I am for bringing all to the life and power of the ever-loving God; and therefore if thou wilt not quarrel with me about my hat, I will not quarrel with thee about thy gown."

On the next Sabbath evening he preached in the same place to upward of fifteen thousand people, and in that and other places throughout the entire week to congregations of like proportions. Everywhere great power attended this preaching. Many of the most coldly inclined persons in his audiences were brought under conviction. A week later the scenes that took place, especially in Edinburgh, "would have made your heart leap for joy," so Whitefield writes to a friend. In addition to those converted there was in that city alone upward of three hundred "seeking after Jesus." Every morning he held "a constant levee of wounded souls." Others, again, were "quite slain by the law." Little children were also "much wrought upon." His congregations continued to consist of many thousands. Never had he seen so many Bibles, and people looking into them with such rapt attention while he was expounding. The emotions of his hearers appeared in various ways: some fell forward upon their faces, crying out in their soul's agony; others seemed struck dumb by the knowledge of the overwhelming love of Christ.

In this way Whitefield continued to preach extensively over Scotland. Wherever the seed was sown

many gracious sheaves sprung up to bless the sower. Early in September he reached Glasgow. On the eleventh of that month he preached his first sermon in the High Church-yard. For five days in succession he continued these exhortations twice a day. Crowds flocked to hear him. So great was the crush, even in the open air, that many women and children fainted. Deeply impressive were the scenes witnessed morning and evening in this church-yard, paved as it was with the tombs of the dead and crowded with living worshipers, weeping and trembling under the power of the word.

So vivid was the impression of Whitefield's preaching, even upon those whom his winged shafts did not always pierce with conviction—so great his power of completely enchaining the attention of the listener—that he could bear them along with him to the exclusion of every thing else. Two incidents in illustration of this point took place at that time in Scotland.

A gentleman returning from one of Whitefield's discourses met on his way home the clergyman to whom he was in the habit of listening each Sunday. The clergyman expressed great surprise that the gentleman should go to hear such a preacher as Whitefield when there were other and better ones nearer home. Disgusted at the conceit of the remark, as well as speaking from the force of truth, the gentleman at once replied: "Sir, when I hear you, I am planting trees all the time, but during the whole of Mr. Whitefield's sermon I could not find time to plant one."

A similar incident was related of a ship-builder. Being twitted by his clergyman for going to hear Whitefield, he sturdily replied: "During *your* sermon I can usually build a ship from stem to stern, but under Mr. Whitefield I cannot lay a single plank."

On his second visit to Scotland, in 1742, Whitefield's heart was again made glad by finding that the good work continued, that the seed so patiently sown had multiplied even beyond his expectations. Arriving at Cambuslang, he preached no less than three times on the day of his coming, forgetful of his wearied condition and that he had preached that same morning in Glasgow. His last sermon of the day was preached from nine in the evening until eleven, and resumed again at one o'clock in the morning, while the fields "resounded all night with prayer and praise." Sinners fell on every side like soldiers in battle that are mown down by a storm of shot and shell. One could scarcely walk a yard without treading upon some prostrate form beseeching God for mercy, or others lying exhausted from efforts in shouting for joy over sins forgiven.

Previous to leaving Cambuslang the holy communion had been received by upward of twenty thousand communicants. Hardly before or since has there been such a scene in Methodism. It took twenty clergymen all day to administer the sacred elements, while outside the sacrament-tents other men of God preached to the penitents who still mourned and sought comfort for their sins. At night the scene was indescribably thrilling as Whitefield exhorted

the vast crowd for an hour and a half with burning eloquence. In the morning he spoke again to fully thirty thousand people. Many were bathed in tears, and others wrung their hands in a voiceless despair or cried out with piercing screams over the picture of a bleeding and agonized Saviour. Such a universal spreading of God's power had rarely been witnessed before.

Whitefield continued to lift up his voice in many places throughout Scotland besides Cambuslang and Glasgow. Sometimes he was coldly received, then sternly withstood, but he kept on his way, preaching from two to seven times a day in many a kirk where his reception had been of the most chilling kind. He went away at times with the remembrance hanging about him as an oppressing cloud; again his labors were graciously blessed, and warm and grateful was the heart he carried in his bosom.

Whitefield visited Scotland no less than fourteen times, the visits extending over a period of twenty-seven years; but although his preaching continued to be attended with good results, and the gospel seed sown flourished with healthful vigor, still no such extensive awakenings greeted him as on his first and second visits.



WESLEY IN SCOTLAND.

ALTHOUGH Whitefield passed through Scotland in such a flame of revival, yet Methodism itself could not be said to have made much headway; for while the whole country from Duncansby Head to Solway

Frith felt the spiritual force of Methodism, still there were never many Methodists by name in Scotland. The most of the rugged old Highlanders stood firmly by their rigid Presbyterian faith.

The first Methodist societies in Scotland were those formed at Dunbar and Musselburgh by soldiers of the king's army who had been converted through the efforts of the brave companions-in-arms—Haime, Evans, Bond, and others, earnest Methodist lay preachers who had been impressed into the army in England. Whitefield had also formed in Edinburgh, three years after the battle of Fontenoy, a society of the worn and scarred veterans who had survived that bloody contest.

When Wesley himself visited Scotland twelve years later, he found these societies still in a prosperous condition. Indeed, the invitation to visit the country and help push on the good work had come from a military officer, a member of one of these societies, who was in quarters at Musselburgh.

In 1751, when Wesley expressed his intention of going to Scotland, in response to the urgent call that had been made, Whitefield tried to dissuade him. Already the state of religious awakening which first greeted Whitefield had undergone such a transformation that well he knew this liberal and free-grace-preaching Methodism would stand little, if any, showing with these stern Calvinists and their rigid election faith. "They will leave you nothing to do but to dispute from morning to night," he said to Wesley. But Wesley was firm, declaring that he

would go and avoid all controversy, sticking closely to the truths of Christianity and the free salvation he went to proclaim. His first sermon at Musselburgh showed the power and force that lay in the man. Although at first his congregation stood as cold and unmoved as statues, gazing with a respectful attention that fell as a shower of cold water upon his Methodistic ardor, nevertheless, as he himself modestly tells us, "the prejudices that the devil had been years in planting were plucked up in an hour." There were no thrilling scenes, no melting into tears, no falling prostrate upon the ground and crying aloud to God, such as had taken place under the stirring power of Whitefield's eloquent preaching; but, instead, the calm, clear force of a reasoning that made its way to the mind as well as to the heart. They heard him and were convinced of many errors, and desired to hear more of what he had to say. He was therefore called upon by a bailiff of the town and an elder of the kirk with the request that he would remain longer with them and explain still further the doctrines he believed. They even proposed to fit up a larger building for him. Though as yet no scenes had occurred to fire his zeal, still this of itself was sufficient to awaken in Wesley's heart the most earnest thanksgiving to God. It was the source of much regret to him that he could not remain as requested, but his engagements were such that he was obliged to return within the week to England. But he left behind him Christopher Hopper, one of the most earnest of his lay preachers, who

had accompanied him over. Much good was done by Hopper, not only in Musselburgh, but also in several of the other towns. "God greatly blessed his word," wrote Hopper, "and raised up witnesses that he had sent us to the North Britons also."

Two years later, in 1753, Wesley again visited Scotland. His first sermon on this occasion was preached just outside the city of Glasgow. But the hour being early and the weather unfavorable, his congregation was exceedingly small. In the afternoon, however, he managed to secure a tent, and preached under it to "six times as many" as in the morning, while the word, as he tells us, was "in power."

The next day it rained very hard; and though *his* courage was equal to encountering it, he knew well enough that that of his congregation would not be, especially as their ardor had been but little aroused. While he was yet in a great dilemma concerning the matter, the pastor of one of the kirks—a good man by the name of Gillies—came to his help by braving public opinion and opening his church to Wesley. The latter accepted it with much gratitude, and preached to a large and earnestly attentive audience. His next congregation had so increased that he was compelled to take them into the open air. On the following Sabbath there were more than a thousand people to hear him. A shower of rain came on, but they stood in unbroken ranks through it all. When he preached his last sermon in Glasgow his audience was so large that it covered the great meadow from end to end. Although few scenes of

religious fervor were witnessed, Wesley's heart was greatly cheered by the attention given him. Several quiet and genuine conversions took place, and these led Wesley to believe that Methodism might yet find a permanent growth in Scotland. But he sometimes felt that he would hail with relief the usual stimulus of a riot: it would at least be a change from this uniform polite indifference with which he was so constantly greeted. These fiery outbursts of mob violence caused him to hope for much in the reaction of the excitable temperaments that gave birth to them.

But these Scotchmen did not persecute him; they did not even *follow* him. They seemed to *know* every thing, and yet *feel* nothing. In short, it soon became to him a problem as to "why the hand of the Lord, who does nothing without a cause, was almost entirely stayed in Scotland." But he did not despair. Even under all these difficulties a few beams of the light had been kindled, and were now beginning to creep forth.

Four years later Wesley was again in Scotland, and at Glasgow he was once more kindly greeted by the Rev. Mr. Gillies and allowed the use of his kirk. Though his congregations soon grew too large for the church-building, and had to be adjourned to the open air, they were still impassive and to all appearance, with but one or two exceptions, unimpressed.

At the poor-house a tent was placed for him in the yard. Here he stood preaching while those of the

inmates who were strong enough crowded about him. In front of him was the infirmary, its windows filled with the sick, and near at hand the lunatic hospital, its inmates reverently listening despite the vacant expression upon some of their faces. To all of these poor and afflicted souls he preached earnestly of the Great Physician so willing and ready to heal. Here also he did what perhaps had never been done before by a Methodist preacher in Scotland: he baptized several children.

He visited many parts of the kingdom, preaching in both town and country, his congregations still on the increase.* Sometimes the audiences were so large that it was impossible to make his words heard even by one-half of them. Notwithstanding these immense gatherings and the interest displayed, very little good effect seemed to follow upon his preaching. But at Dunbar and Musselburgh, where the soldier societies had been formed, the results were different. These heroes of Fontenoy had accomplished a glorious work, and wherever outsiders had joined them, so earnestly and faithfully had they been taught, Wesley found that "the national shyness and stubbornness were gone, and they were as open and teachable as little children."

When we compare the result of Wesley's preaching in Scotland with that of Whitefield, it seems incredible that their hearers could have been one and the same people. Under the clear, forcible discourse of the former, they stood attentive but unimpressed; under the burning eloquence of the latter, they wept

aloud or fell like dead men on every side. But the pulpit style of Whitefield, so different from Wesley's, doubtless had not so much to do with this after all as something else which lay deeper and took a firm hold upon these creed-loving Scotchmen. Whitefield was an ardent Calvinist, and thus the doctrine he sought to formulate toned in far more readily with their own than did that of Wesley. Because of this same election by divine grace, which had been the old faith of their fathers, they were willing to give their feelings free rein and follow blindly after Whitefield; whereas at Wesley's broader attacks they at once threw themselves upon the defensive, and allowed suspicion and distrust to hold in check all warmer impulses.

But soon was coming one through whose efforts Methodism, especially in Glasgow, was to take firm root, and from which grew a vigorous and far-spreading tree that continues to this day.



THE SINNER IN THE TREE.

DURING Whitefield's first visit to Scotland, in the summer of 1741, one of his favorite places of preaching was in a large field near the city of Edinburgh. He usually took his stand beneath a venerable tree, whose giant branches afforded him shelter from the sun. On one occasion, as he was preaching here to a large and deeply interested audience, a poor, foolish man, thinking to make fun for himself and others, climbed up into the tree and established himself directly above the preacher's head. There he en-

deavored with all sorts of monkey-like gestures and grimaces to imitate Whitefield. The latter had not proceeded far with his discourse when he became aware that something of an unusual nature was taking place. Guided by the glances of his audience, he soon caught a glimpse of the silly clown in the tree without appearing to do so. It was not his plan to seem aware of his presence just at that time. His ready wit had shown him how at the proper point he might take advantage even of this ridiculous incident to turn it not only to his own account, but perhaps to the eternal good of the poor foolish man who thus made such a figure of himself.

The subject Whitefield was illustrating was the mighty power of divine grace—of how God had often chosen some of the most unlikely objects for the manifestation of his omnipotence. The gifted preacher went on and on with his inspiring theme, rising to some of the grandest heights of eloquence, and bearing his congregation along with him, till soon as one man, with parted lips and suspended breath, they hung upon his words. Even the poor creature in the tree had forgotten for the last moment or so to make his silly grimaces. Suddenly at the very climax of Whitefield's sweeping eloquence he paused, and, slowly turning around, extended his arm toward the man clinging to the limbs of the tree above his head, then exclaimed in a voice that fell upon every ear with an indescribable thrill: "Even he, that mimicking creature yonder, may yet be made the subject of God's free and resistless grace!"

The bolt struck home. As an arrow winged by the hand of Divine Retribution it had pierced the sinner's heart. Crying aloud for mercy, he fell to the ground at Whitefield's feet; nor did he rise again till the pitying hand of the Great Physician had healed his wound.

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"THE DOOR WAS SHUT."

WHITEFIELD once preached at Glasgow from the text, "The door was shut." He had the unusual good fortune of securing a church-building, and a large and fashionable audience had assembled to hear him.

In this congregation was a highly respectable lady, who, unable to get a seat nearer the pulpit, was forced to sit not far from the door. Just in front of her she observed two light-headed and flashily dressed young men who were mocking the gestures and expressions of the preacher and ridiculing his most solemn appeals. On Whitefield's repeating his text the lady overheard one of these young men say to the other in a low tone: "Well, what if the door be shut? another will open." In a few moments, much to the surprise of the lady, Whitefield answered this remark as if he had heard every word, which could not be possible at his distance from the young men. He had doubtless caught the meaning of the question from their manner and the expression of their faces, for no man was more skilled in divining the operations of the human heart than Mr. Whitefield. Often he seemed to read the innermost thoughts and feelings

of his hearers. In the midst of his sermon Whitefield suddenly paused, and, fixing his flaming eyes upon the two ill-behaved young men, said in a voice that penetrated to the farthest corners of the room: "It is possible there may be some careless, trifling person here to-day, who may ward off the force of this impressive subject by lightly thinking, 'What matter if the door be shut? another will open.'" The two young men were paralyzed. How could he have heard them? Whitefield continued: "Yes, another door will open; and I will tell you what door it will be: it will be the door of the bottomless pit, the door of hell!—the door which conceals from the eyes of angels the horrors of damnation!"

A thrill ran through the large audience—women screamed, men bowed their heads and groaned aloud. The two offenders uttered not a sound, but, unable to endure the fire of those flaming eyes, dropped their heads upon their hands, trembling in every limb. A horror unutterable seized them, and from it no relief came until days afterward, when as humble, conscience-stricken penitents they presented themselves at the altar for pardon and prayer, and felt the weight of their sins drop away.

* * *

AN EXECUTION AND A SERMON.

WHILE in Edinburgh, on his first visit to Scotland, Whitefield heard of a man who was to be executed in a field near the city. Following a motive of his own, and which was afterward explained, Whitefield

became one of the spectators of the terrible scene. His appearance, however, was much commented upon; for by this time he was well known throughout the city, and various were the conjectures as to the object which had led him to mingle with the crowd surrounding the gallows.

The next day being Sunday, he preached to a vast assembly gathered in one of the fields not far from the place of the execution. In his sermon he referred to the awful scene of the preceding day, and thus spoke to the multitude: "I know that many of you may find it difficult to reconcile my appearance yesterday with my clerical character. Many of you, I know, will say that my moments would have been better employed in praying for the unhappy man than in attending him to the fatal tree; and that perhaps curiosity was the only cause that converted me into a spectator on that occasion; but those who ascribe that uncharitable motive to me are under a mistake. I went as an observer of human nature, and to see the effect that such an occurrence would have on those who witnessed it. I watched the conduct of those who were present on that awful occasion, and I was highly pleased with their demeanor, which has given me a very favorable opinion of the Scotch nation. Your sympathy was visible on your countenances, particularly when the moment arrived that your unhappy fellow-creature was to close his eyes upon this world forever. Then you all, as if moved by one impulse, turned your heads aside and wept. Those tears were precious, and will be held

in remembrance. How different it was when the Saviour of mankind was extended on the cross! The Jews instead of sympathizing in his sorrows triumphed in them. They reviled him with bitter expressions, with words even more bitter than the gall and vinegar which they handed him to drink. Not one of all who witnessed his pains turned his head aside, even in the last pangs. Yes, my friends, there was one: that glorious luminary [pointing to the sun] veiled his brightness, and traveled on his course in tenfold night."

This scene caused Whitefield to hope much from the sympathetic Scotch temperament.



THOMAS TAYLOR AND HIS ITINERANCY.

IN 1765 a new champion from the Methodist ranks entered Scotland. This was Thomas Taylor, who for the past four years had been regularly connected with Wesley's conference.

Taylor was a Yorkshire man, and like bold John Nelson had a lion's heart and a hero's soul. His parents dying in his infancy, he had passed a neglected and turbulent youth. Even at the tender period of childhood he was hardened in all manner of wickedness. He could swear like the most abandoned rough, nor did he "stick at lying." In after years, speaking of this period of his life, he said: "O that I could write it in tears of blood!" As he grew older his vicious tendencies became stronger. He plunged into every conceivable vice, his mouth

being ever "fraught with oaths, lies, and deceit." He became an adept at gambling, and having little money set out to win his living in this manner. In the language of one of his biographers, "he was one of those reckless cases of early vice which Methodism alone at that day seemed adapted to reach."

In his seventeenth year he heard Whitefield preach. The trumpet voice smote his conscience with "an amazing power." He made the best of resolutions for a new life only to break them, since he had trusted in his own strength alone. Unable to endure his wretchedness, he sought relief by attempting to enlist in the army; but fortunately for his own soul's good, and that of scores of others he was to bring to Christ, he proved a half inch too short for the regular standard.

Not long afterward he heard another burning sermon, this time from a zealous Independent preacher, which vigorously revived within his heart the impression Whitefield had left. While still under conviction he met a Methodist lay preacher, heard him preach, and, seeking diligently in the way pointed out, was soundly converted.

Previous to his arrival in Scotland, Taylor had known hardy itinerant service in England, Ireland, and Wales. In Yorkshire he had been in some of the stormiest of the scenes. For two years he had traveled through the cold, bleak mountains of Wales, enduring the most terrible hardships from hunger and exposure—often set upon by lawless bands, and bearing away with him from many such encounters a

bruised body or a bleeding head. In 1763 he had been sent to Ireland, where, boldly attacking the corrupt doctrine of the Papists, he frequently came near losing his life, saving it each time by what seemed barely less than a miracle. He did for a time lose both his speech and hearing from sickness brought on through exposure.

Two years later we find him in Scotland, sent by Wesley to plant the Methodist standard on the frowning battlements of Glasgow. It seemed a herculean task, and in many respects well-nigh hopeless—none knowing this better than Wesley himself. But Taylor's work in other places—that bred-in-the-bone patience and persistence which seemed so strong a part of him, and which had often gained him the victory where those preceding him had failed—led Wesley to hope that the stony crust of Scotch indifference might yet be penetrated through his efforts. The sequel shows how well he judged the man.

The circumstances under which Taylor first pushed his way into Scotland would have dismayed any heart less courageous. The winter was approaching. He was in a strange land, among a cold, inhospitable people—a people who opposed an iron front of prejudice against the doctrines he came to preach. There was no society, no place for the preacher's entertainment, not even a place to preach in, and in all the city not *one* friend to whom he could go in appeal or for consultation. He took a private lodging, scarcely knowing how to pay for it when the time came, but trusting God through all.

His first attempt at preaching was even more disheartening than his reception in the city had been. Giving out that he would preach the next day on the Green, a public resort near the city, he went at the specified time to keep his appointment. He carried a small table to serve as a pulpit. He found only two old women and two baker's boys awaiting him. His soul sunk. Was *this* the congregation he had traveled nearly six hundred miles over land and sea to meet? But hope revived. Doubtless other hearers would drop in after awhile. He waited ten, fifteen, twenty minutes—still no one came. At length, determined to proclaim the tidings even to this handful of listeners, he mounted the table and began to sing. The sound of his voice attracted other hearers, and one by one they began to make their way toward him, each seemingly from the poorest walks of life, until finally he had about two hundred around him.

He went again the following night, and this time had a more promising congregation. The third night a violent storm of rain and wind came up, so that he could not keep his appointment. This quite cast him down, especially as he had noted at the last meeting many little encouraging signs. "The enemy," he says, "assaulted me sorely, so that I was ready to cry out, 'It is better for me to die than to live!' But God pitied my weakness."

The next day the rain-clouds were driven away and the sun shone forth in a clear sky. With a buoyant heart he took the field again, and bravely held it every day, and sometimes twice a day, for three months.

His congregations continued to increase, until soon it was difficult to reach them with his voice.

At one meeting the crowd was so large that he could not command a view of it from his low table. He placed a chair upon it which still did not give him the advantage he desired. Seeing a high stone wall near at hand, he ascended it and from its top cried to the surging multitude: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live!" He came down from the wall with a heart filled with many struggling hopes and emotions for the result of this appeal, as he had noticed how the assembly stood rapt in "unusual silence and attention." But alas! as he sought to make his way out through the sea of hearers, he was astonished and grieved to see them quietly open and form a lane for him to pass through, at the same time coldly staring at him. Not an eye flashed upon him with the least interest or sympathy; not a lip moved to ask him, a stranger among strangers: "Where dwellest thou? Hast thou lodging or food for to-night?"

"I walked home," he says, "much dejected." It was such a reception as fell with the chill of cold water upon his ardent Yorkshire temperament. Not even his resolute endurance was equal to this Scotch apathy—a thousand times more trying than the persecution of the fiercest mob. But later he came more clearly to understand it, and was given renewed energy to grapple with it. The Scotchman's religion he found was in his creed—"the old rigid tenets of

the league and covenant"—and his heart fastened about this with the fixity of flint, and he was utterly unable to accept any other that had within it so little of doctrine, so much of action. "God selected you and set you apart from the foundation of the world, either to receive eternal life through his sovereign grace, or to endure the pangs of the lost according solely as he wills"—so said their Calvinistic precept. "Come unto me, *all* ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest"—thus spoke the Saviour whom the Methodist faith proclaimed. But under the fervent and patient preaching of a man so truly consecrated, so earnestly determined as Taylor, even the stony barrier of this rigid Scotch creed was to be broken in many places.

An incident that happened about this time shows how hard set the Scotch nature really was against the broader and more liberal doctrine of universal salvation. A Scotchman was condemned for murder. Taylor heard of it, and went to see him. He continued his visits daily, talking with him earnestly in regard to his soul's condition, and praying fervently for his pardon from sin. On the day of the execution Taylor attended him to the gallows, where, in accordance with a barbarous custom then in vogue, the right-hand of the criminal was chopped off with an ax and affixed to the scaffold in front of him. Although his heart was chilled at this terrible sight, Taylor kept his place at the condemned man's side, comforting and encouraging him. After his death Taylor spoke publicly of the case, declaring that the

criminal had died truly penitent, and that he did not doubt that God for Christ's sake had pardoned his sins. The Church people were outraged and indignant, and thereupon so great a cry was raised that it seemed at first they would literally force Taylor away from the city. "It is amazing," he says, "what a cry was raised against me for saying God had mercy on such a sinner." Nor did the matter end here. Scurrilous articles were printed against him. Everywhere upon the streets the papers containing them were cried for sale. One overzealous Scot even began the publication of a weekly paper, the sole purpose of which was to continue this subject.

His case, he says, was now of the most deplorable kind, for he not only had famine within doors but "plenty of reproach without." He had to practice the most rigid economy to save himself from extreme want. To pay for his lodgings he was compelled to sell his horse; but even in the midst of his own great need—so responsive did his heart beat to another's woe—he shared the proceeds with a poor brother preacher, who, in passing through Glasgow on his way to Ireland, had crippled his own horse so badly that he was unfit to be ridden, and he had not the means to bear him forward on his journey. Ah, this mystic tie of Methodist clerical brotherhood! Where else, since the world began, has been shown grander examples of self-sacrifice and heroism?

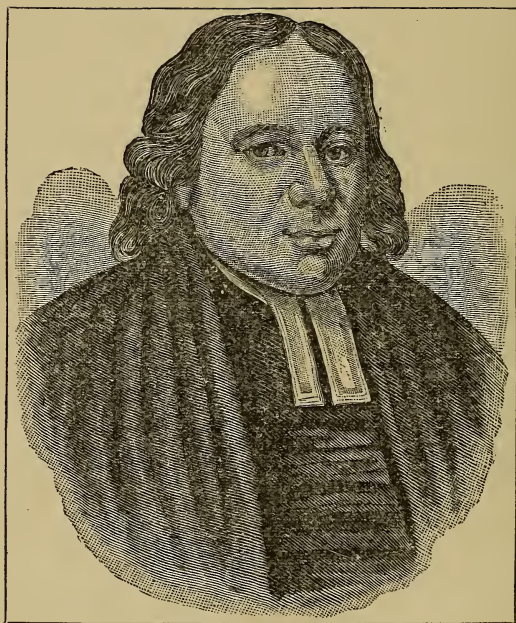
Never in all his life had poor Taylor kept so many *genuine fast* days. Once for three days in succession he had not a morsel to eat. And yet it was important,

though seemingly impossible, to keep up his credit. That once gone, he knew there would no longer be a foot-hold for him in the whole city. To save his credit he adopted all sorts of heroic expedients. We say heroic, for none but a hero could have gone through the trial as he did. He would frequently go out at meal-time, requesting his landlady not to prepare his humble repast. As he dressed himself with scrupulous care on these occasions, she thought he had gone to dine or sup elsewhere, when in reality he had only gone out to walk about until the meal-time had passed, afterward to "return to his room with a hungry stomach."

As sore as were these trials, they seemed even more so in that they were hopelessly endured. For the Master's sake he would have been glad to bear these and more, but when after this heroic endurance, these pitiful self-sacrifices, he seemed to make no headway in the preaching of the word, faint indeed grew his heart. But not yet would he give up. He would again go forth to battle, newly girded for the fray. So, braving the trials by which he was surrounded, the coldness that greeted him on every side, he continued to preach in the streets night and morning until the severe winter weather rendered it impossible. And now, for the first time since his coming to Scotland, the Master seemed to bless the efforts of his heroic servant. Under this faithful system of street preaching many sound conversions occurred. A little society was formed; and by the time that the weather had become too inclement for outdoor

preaching, a room was secured and fitted up with seats and a pulpit. Happy indeed was the heart of Taylor now! Every morning, though still poorly lodged and scantily clothed, he rose with a song of rejoicing on his lips, and at night went to bed with a prayer of thanksgiving in his heart. One by one the members of the little society increased; shoot by shoot the precious seeds of the patient planting began to spring up; friends surrounded him on all sides, and Methodism seemed at last to have come into Glasgow, and to *stay*. It is there now, a hardy if not a very vigorous plant.

It is a curious fact that not until the society had reached forty or fifty members did any one think to ask the worn and shabby preacher where he lodged and how he fared. They seemed sincerely affected when they learned how it really was with him, and thenceforth liberally supplied his wants. He continued to "labor mightily" with them through the winter, and in the spring left them with seventy members. He went elsewhere in Scotland, he formed more societies, other itinerants were sent out to help him—Alex McNab, Duncan Wright, and others—until Methodism became a quickening power throughout Scotland.



THOMAS COKE.

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IN HEATHEN LANDS.

THE FIRST WEST INDIAN MISSION.

NATHANIEL GILBERT, a rich West Indian planter, visited England in 1760 in search of health. Soon after arriving at his country-seat, near Wandsworth, he heard John Wesley preach—the first Methodist sermon to which he had ever listened. He was so impressed with the soundness and force of the new doctrine that he invited Wesley to preach in his house. On this occasion, besides the family, a number of slaves were present—among them three who seemed unusually impressed. Wesley was forcibly struck with the earnestness of their attention and the intelligence with which they received his words. The whole scene stamped itself indelibly upon his heart. “Shall not His saving grace be made known to *all* nations?” The thought took deep root, and caused him to direct his efforts more especially to the slaves. He was well repaid. The shaft entered their souls too deeply to be removed. They trembled, wept, and besought his prayers. A few days later he was sent for to baptize two of the negroes, both females, who thus became the first African professors of Christianity in the world.

Shortly afterward Mr. Gilbert was himself converted to Methodism, and went back to his estate in

Antigua aglow with the zeal which the grand old Mother Doctrine so infallibly enkindles in the hearts of her children. He was an educated man and a great man in his island, for he had been governor, and was now speaker of the House of Assembly. But better still than greatness, he had a firmness and devotion of character that gave him the will and found the way to do what very few men in his position would have done. It put into his heart the determination to preach to his slaves—to throw the light about their darkened path, let it cost him what it would. He was a proud man, a ruler in society, the owner of many slaves, but he counted the sacrifice of his pride as nothing in the light of the new duty before him. So, with the help of the two slaves already converted he began earnestly to lead the others into the light.

At first he opened his own mansion for weekly religious services, which he conducted after the manner of a class-leader; but later on he fixed up a detached room as a regular chapel, fitting it with pulpit and seats. By this time many conversions had taken place, so that when the room was ready for occupancy there were some fifteen or twenty members ready to be formed into a society. To this society Gilbert became the first pastor, for he had so far overcome certain doubts and misgivings as to take upon himself the work. The room fitted up and the society organized, lo! Methodism in this far-away heathen land had become a blessed reality.

But persecution arose, as it had arisen elsewhere.

Gilbert was branded through the island as a madman. Society at once denounced him and turned her back upon him. Friends gave him the cold shoulder. Enemies did their best to bring calamities upon him. But he was a brave man. So long as he felt the approval of his Divine Master he cared naught for the dislike of men; and despite cold shoulders, biting words, and even persecution, he kept fearlessly up to his duty. His heart was thrilled and his soul constantly upheld by the scenes enacted around him, as one by one these poor benighted blacks came out of the chill and gloom of spiritual bondage into the glow of the gospel light.

Soon his society numbered two hundred, only a few of whom were white, and those mostly of Gilbert's own family. He was the only one there was to preach to them, but with true missionary zeal he seemed never to grow weary of his task. For years he toiled on, tireless and alone, then went home to his reward, leaving his little flock pastorless and well-nigh inconsolable. But the light was not to go out—the infant church, the first of its faith in that distant isle, was not to become merely as a name that had been spoken. The two pious negro women, who had been converted by Wesley in England, now took up the work as best they could. They could not preach, but they could hold class and prayer meetings; and this they did with all the ardor of their faith—not once a week, nor twice, but regularly every evening.

In 1778, John Baxter, a London mechanic, seeking

a less crowded field for employment, went to the West Indies and to Antigua. Baxter was an ardent Methodist, and seeing the needs of the struggling society of earnest blacks, it needed no second solicitation to induce him to place himself at their head. He went to work with a trust and a devotion that would have removed mountains had they stood in his way. So great was his success that five years later he was enabled, entirely through the contributions of slaves, to erect a neat and commodious chapel—the first Methodist Church in the West India Islands.

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THE LIGHT GROWS.

THE year after Wesley's death (1792), Thomas Coke—the brave missionary bishop, of whom we shall hear more after awhile—going on his fifth voyage to America, took with him Daniel Graham as the first missionary to the West India Islands from the Wesleyan Societies. On the route they stopped at the island of St. Eustatius, then, as now, under control of the Dutch Government. Here the bishop came upon a distressing state of affairs. Through the efforts of Nathaniel Gilbert and some of his converted slaves the gospel light had spread into many of the islands, St. Eustatius among others. Coke was surprised and thrilled to find in St. Eustatius a society of many scores of black souls; but so fierce was the persecution that raged, so determined the attitude of the planters, that the class had to meet in secret, often at the peril of their lives. Missionaries

had been positively forbidden the island, and threatened with the severest handling; but Coke and his companions fearlessly landed. He managed to meet with the society and to put renewed hope and courage into their hearts, promising to send them a pastor at no distant day.

At Dominica, British West Indies, he found a society of between a hundred and fifty and two hundred, but fast losing courage and strength for the want of a leader. Coke had them assembled and addressed them in cheering words, although by so doing he put his life in jeopardy. The scene brought the hot tears raining from his eyes, as amidst the waving palms and *lignum-vitæ* of the grove where he had gathered them these stricken black souls prostrated themselves before him, crying aloud for help. He comforted them as best he could, and left with the same promise that he had made at St. Eustatius. Both promises were faithfully kept.

Going to St. Vincent's, they found that Lumb, a bold preacher who had made his way there in spite of every threat, had been arrested and thrown into prison. With the courage of a martyr and the soul of a hero, he continued to preach to the "weeping negroes" even through the grated windows of his cell. It was a touching scene, but many hardened hearts looked upon it unmoved.

The severest rules against preaching had been formed in the island. For the first attempt the penalty was "fine and imprisonment," for the second "flogging or banishment," and for the third, "*death*."

Yet, while working under the very shadow of death, the heroic Lumb had pressed on his way so steadily that now fully "a thousand slaves were stretching out their hands unto God." They stood in the streets about his window, and cried unto him as unto a savior. Hundreds of them lost their lives in pressing on after the truth. They had neither the tact nor the will to hide the true state of their awakening. Under the savage law of either killing the slaves or killing out the religion in them, many were beaten to death or more mercifully hanged.

Through the devotion of the noble Coke this savage law was at length annulled, but not before at least five hundred of these poor, miserable creatures had lost their lives at St. Vincent's alone. It is a terrible chapter—painful to write, painful to read—and one turns from it to the better things that follow with a feeling of intense relief.

Driven by unmanageable winds into Antigua, where he had not intended to land during this trip, Coke afterward looked upon it as a special dispensation of Providence, for there he found the zealous Baxter in the very midst of his successes and surrounded by a flourishing society. It put renewed hope into his heart. With Baxter's co-operation he was enabled to send missionaries into various isolated sections. Upon Baxter himself he laid his hands in ordination, and then sent him as an evangelist from island to island, preaching as he went, and thus preparing the ground for the good seed other sowers were to come after him to sow.

Through the efforts of the Wesleyan societies in England, the devotion of this good bishop, and the untiring zeal of his missionaries, the spiritual condition of these miserable beings—the West India Island slaves—began to improve. By 1797 there were twenty-two missionaries in the different islands. Law, order, and peace now prevailed throughout the various settlements—a state of affairs that had never been known to exist there before. The slaves were like new creatures—clean, happy, and docile. Even the unconverted ones seemed to have undergone a change. Many of the whites, too, had embraced Methodism, and the consequence was a far better understanding between master and slave. When the French invasion of the islands occurred the slaves showed what Methodism had done for them by standing up bravely in defense of the whites against the invaders. Especially was this the case in Jamaica. The government, seeing this behavior and honestly recognizing its true cause, gratefully offered Coke free passage to any of the islands for every Methodist missionary who cared to go out. Verily, the light had grown until it penetrated even blinded eyes.

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THROUGH FIERY TRIALS.

FIERCE persecutions and fiery trials again arose. The Legislature of Jamaica, traitorous to the debt they owed to Methodism and its zealous advocates, and bitterly jealous of the influence her people were gaining in the island, again made a cruel law against

preaching to the slaves. This time it was more cruel and unjust than ever, since it made an exception of the ministers of the English and Scotch Churches. They were allowed to preach wherever and whenever they desired, but for the Methodist missionaries the fine was imprisonment for life, even for the first sermon. Stephenson, a brave missionary, who had just begun on the island the most promising work attempted for years, was arrested under this law and imprisoned until his health was ruined and his mind nearly wrecked. Others suffered more or less severely, for regardless of the penalty many bold spirits threw themselves impetuously into the work.

At last, through strong efforts, the English king was induced to do away with this harsh and inhuman law, and for a time there was great joy among the Methodist missionaries and the slaves they instructed. But seven years later the vindictive spirit of the home government again broke forth, and another law was made forbidding "any Methodist missionary or other sectary, to instruct slaves or to admit them to any meeting."

For ten years now the fiercest persecution raged, not only against missionaries who endeavored to do their duty in the face of the unjust law, but also against the negroes who still clung to their Methodist faith. Many were beaten, others cruelly tortured, and some put to death. The chapels which the Methodists had erected were either nailed up or leveled to the ground, and their hymn-books and Bibles destroyed.

But the king again canceled the unjust law, and once more Methodism was allowed to enter the West India Islands. It came now *to stay*. Never had there been a more glorious outflow. It seemed as a stream that, long confined, on breaking its banks swept all before it.

So greatly had the labors of these indefatigable workers been blessed that by 1815 it was estimated that they gained converts at the rate of a "thousand a year." Especially was this true of Jamaica, the very place where the cruel law originated and where it had been so rigidly enforced. "No region ever changed character so rapidly," says one of the records. And Methodism—glorious, indomitable, *pushing* Methodism—did it all. "It began at the bottom and brought the heathen to marriage, to neatness, to Sabbath observance, to Christian song and prayer." In short, it made an entirely new being of him, as though he had indeed been born again. "For more than seventy years," so reads the record, "from 1760 to 1834, no Methodist slave was ever guilty of incendiarism and rebellion." Soon there were no less than three hundred places for preaching on this island alone.

In Antigua, where Methodism in this heathen land had first appeared, it grew and flourished as that tree alone can grow and flourish which is nourished by the sunlight and watered by the dews of heaven. But the glorious work did not stop here. It pushed its way into the islands of other nations; it spread north, south, east, and west. It went into South

America; and there, after the direst persecution—ending in the demolition of the first chapel that had been built at Demarara, and in throwing the whole colony “into an uproar”—it unfolded its white banner of love, and with strengthful fingers brought forth from all these chords of tumult the glad harmony of progress and peace. To-day some of the most flourishing missions of the M. E. Church, South, are in South America.

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THE FIRST MISSIONARY BISHOP.

WHEN the persecution of the Methodists in England was at its height, the Rev. Thomas Coke, curate of the parish of South Petherton, Somersetshire, began to speak boldly for this new religion which purified men’s souls and made them participants of their Maker’s joys here on earth. The Church was shaken to its very center. Never had these good (?) people been so outraged! That *they* should be shown their duty by this stripling! It was too much! and they were not long in complaining to the rector. He, in turn, sharply admonished the rather too ardent curate.

But the ardor of this young advocate was not to be easily cooled. He continued to preach as he felt—a sort of preaching so unusual in that spiritually stagnant community that crowds of eager, interested outsiders flocked to hear him. Often the building would not hold the half of them. At his own expense he enlarged it by adding a gallery. Then lo! a great

change took place in the members of the church. Many of them heard and believed. It was not the people now who complained to the rector, but the rector to the people. The thing must be stopped, he declared. Finally he dismissed the curate, and when the intrepid young man again attempted to preach he stirred up a mob against him, and at length had him chimed out of the church.

With his zeal not one whit quenched, young Coke did what the true Methodistic fire had led other such bold spirits to do before him—he took to field-preaching. But let us learn something more of the life of this man, who in after years was to become “the father of the missions of the great Wesleyan Church,” the “prince of modern missionaries,” and the first bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

Thomas Coke was born the only child of wealthy parents, at Brecon, Wales, in 1747. We shall see how this “quick-kindling Welsh blood” became an enlivening vein in Methodism and awakened many a stagnant energy into warm life. His father was not only wealthy but a man of prominence, being mayor of the place. Young Coke had had every advantage for culture. At sixteen he entered Oxford, from whence he graduated with distinction. He was a remarkably handsome young man, with regular features, soft dark hair that clustered in curls about his shoulders, a complexion as fair and beautiful as a girl’s, and large liquid brown eyes that could melt with tenderness or flash with spirit. Even up

to the day of his death, when the snows of many winters had whitened his once dark hair, the serene beauty and sweetness of Dr. Coke's face were remarked by all. When an old man, with Time's relentless finger-prints showing deeply upon his once smooth countenance, Dr. Coke passed several weeks at the home of the maternal great-grandfather of this writer, in Charleston, S. C.—in which home he wrote the most of two volumes of his now famous commentaries. He was the idol of every child and servant on the place, not so much for the kind, soft voice and gentle ways as for the serenely beautiful face that mirrored itself in their hearts as only the faces of the truly good *can* be mirrored. “Him face the face of a’ angel, missus!” the children’s nurse often said with a look in her eyes which plainly indicated that the tribute came from the depths of her heart.

Young Coke, as we have seen, took to street-preaching when dismissed from his church. He soon afterward showed the true manly grit that was in him by boldly taking his stand on the steps of the church to preach the farewell sermon he had been forbidden to deliver from its pulpit. It was one of the most stirring of all the scenes in Methodism; for though the young preacher had not yet formally united himself with the Methodists, still he was one at heart. Instigated by those who hated him, simply because they had injured him, rude men had gathered baskets of stones with which to pelt him. Many of these did fall about him, as well as a shower of rotten eggs and

other missiles, but God mercifully preserved him. He put it into the hearts of the young minister's friends to bravely stand by him. They declared that he should preach if they had to cover him with their bodies and fight the mob hand to hand. It was an impressive scene as Coke, surrounded by the scowling faces of defeated enemies, earnestly warned them to "flee from the wrath to come." He now entered upon a remarkable period—months spent in the arduous yet exciting task of field-preaching. What a picture was this! Here was a young man, wealthy, gifted, moving in the best circles, and with a brilliant career ready at his choice, yet leaving all, resolutely turning his back upon every earthly allurements, to become an humble itinerant of Methodism.

When Coke was twenty-nine years of age he met with Wesley. The great organizer of Methodism saw the promise and the power in this little ex-curate who had been dismissed from his church for boldly speaking out on the side of truth. There was a difference of forty-four years in their ages, yet they became the closest, the most confidential of friends. Coke was now thoroughly identified with Methodism. No man brought to the work a more unyielding faith, a more tireless energy than he. He was here, there, and everywhere. He seemed to have pinions, so quickly did he go from place to place. Once a year regularly he visited Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and the other countries where Methodism had become such a quickening power. Eighteen times he crossed the Atlantic, whose leaping waves seemed so fit an

emblem of his untiring spirit. Like his predecessors in the Methodist itinerant ranks, he met with many indignities. He was pelted with sticks and stones, even bruised and beaten, and once he was nearly drowned with the slops from a fire-engine.

But that which has given to the name of Coke its true glory forever, to his memory an ever-enduring hold on the heart of Methodism, was his love for missions. It has been said of him that he was not only a missionary but "a whole missionary society in himself." He gave his prayers, his energy, his money, his all to the cause, and then wept because there was no more to give. In 1778, when the word "mission" first sprung into use it fell upon his ears as the call of the bugle sets aquiver every nerve in the steed chafing for battle. He now saw where the work lay, the work that God had specially for him to do. "The world is my parish!"—that had been Wesley's motto, the grand trumpet-call of Methodism, the true germ and spirit of Christian love of every purely missionary enterprise from that day to this. "O!" cried Coke from the depths of the heart where the pure missionary fire burned with the whirlwind's sweep, "I want the wings of an angel and the voice of a trumpet that I may proclaim the gospel through the east, the west, the north, the south!" God gave him the wings in the strength that seemed to be an ever-springing fount within, while his voice, made trumpet-like by the mighty force of his own zeal, *did* pierce the "locked darkness" of two continents, and swept on even to the distant isles of the sea.

From that time onward there was no plan too great or too difficult for his mighty energy to undertake. When others held back irresolute, weakly predicting failure, he acted, and brought from the action the rich consummation of success. He not only gave almost his entire patrimony to the cause of missions, but he was constantly entreating others to give. Thousands of pounds thus found their way to the work through him. It is told of him that once he was at a certain sea-port, begging for missions. His manner and his words were such that it was almost impossible for any one to resist them. The captains of two vessels then lying in port chanced to meet. In the conversation that ensued one said to the other: "Did a man run to you this morning for money for what he called a mission?" "Yes," replied the other. "Ah, but he is a heavenly-minded little d——l," continued the first speaker; "he got my last penny."

His zeal for the cause, which glowed as a perpetual fire within his heart, led him at nearly seventy years of age to offer himself as a missionary to India. No such example of utter consecration, of sublime zeal, had ever had record since to a lost and sin-blinded world came One to die for *all*. "India cleaves to my heart," declared Coke with the tears streaming down his face. And truly the state of affairs there was enough to make it cleave to any man's heart in which the least spark of humanity remained.

Thirty years before Coke had begun to plan this mission to India in 1780, the great British soldier, Lord Clive, had opened to the eyes of civilization

this wonderful heathen land, while to-day hundreds of Christian chapels dot its surface, and the name of God is breathed in fervent prayer from thousands of dusky lips. But then what a picture it presented, this land of spice-groves and perfumed breezes, where "every prospect" gave pleasure to the eyes and "only man was vile!" Heathenism in its most revolting form, that of Buddhism, reigned supreme. Millions of human souls sat in the horrors of darkness, and this darkness was intensified by the East India Company's persistent refusal to allow missionaries to enter the country.

For years Coke battled with these prejudices and these harsh, inhuman decrees, hoping to break them down. But one island remained free from this Company's control, that of "balmy Ceylon," the very island of which the imperishable song above quoted from was written—Ceylon "the threshold of India." At sixty years of age Coke began to study the language, that he might go if others failed. When he offered himself to the Conference for work in India many objections were raised: first the question of his age, many regarding it as almost suicidal for a man of his years to attempt such a mission; and then the question as to means. It was utterly impossible at that time, they declared, for the body to undertake so expensive a work. But standing before them with the tears welling in his eyes, he announced it as his intention to furnish his own means even to the extent of thirty thousand pounds. Abashed and ashamed, they could say no more. What *could* be

said, in the face of such sublime devotion as this? And not only did he offer to pay his own expenses, but those of six helpers.

On the last day of the year 1814 the good ship that bore these consecrated missionaries sailed from England. But alas! the author of this heroic movement was never to know its glorious consummation. Dying on the voyage, his body found a grave at the bottom of the ocean, "where pearls lie deep," while from out the crown of Methodism no gems shine with a more brilliant luster than the noble deeds of this peerless man who laid his all, even life itself, upon the altar of missionary consecration. Although his great heart had ceased to beat, and the coral-beds of the Indian Ocean forever entombed from the sight of men the tireless frame that had at last found the silence of Death's eternal seal, still his spirit lived, and, caught by others, knew no respite till the glad light of the gospel had spread to the remotest corners of those far-off isles of the sea.

* * *

THE LIGHT BREAKS IN INDIA.

AFTER a tempestuous voyage Coke's brave young missionaries reached Ceylon. Their hearts grew sick as they contemplated the fearful difficulties and dangers by which they were surrounded. But they did not despair—they had caught from their leader too much of his own dauntless spirit for that. Idol-worship prevailed throughout the island. Even the English commander, Lord Molesworth, while he did not

bow openly with these heathen to the gods of their idolatry, had his own gods in secret. As brave a man as he was physically, and as enlightened, he nevertheless knew naught of the love and fear of God in his heart. But he was a kind, hospitable man. He at once took the missionaries to his home and entertained them at his table. It was a happy day for him. Under their first sermon he was graciously awakened; and later, at a prayer-meeting, he found that "full peace" which put the glad crown to his happiness. Another remarkable conversion was that of an attaché of the commander's staff, a man born in Ceylon but of foreign parents. But the turning of Lord Molesworth to their faith was the most promising event for the missionaries. He stood by them in every thing, enriching their cause with his substance, and strengthening it by his presence at all their meetings. Methodism never had a bolder or a truer soldier. But alas! he was not long to do battle in her behalf. His tragic end is one of the most pathetic incidents in the history of the Church. The vessel on which he and his devoted wife had taken passage to England being wrecked, "his latest breath was spent in declaring Christ to the perishing company." To the last his shrill voice, calling in expostulation or entreaty, could be heard high over all the tumult of wind and waves. Later, his body was thrown up on the African shore with his faithful wife's arms locked about his neck.

The other of these first two converts to Methodism in India became himself a missionary, an ear-

nest laborer among his people—the first native Methodist preacher in Asia. He penetrated the temples, even to the very sanctuaries of the idols, and there, addressing the priests in their own language, urged them to turn from the darkness of their ways. Many determined hands were laid upon his person to force him away. Abuse and even vile epithets were heaped upon him. Once or twice he stood face to face with death, but he never flinched. As the light began to break and to penetrate the darkened corners, the missionaries grew bolder. This native-born preacher and those who had come from England now entered the temples, and there, surrounded by irate priests, frenzied devotees, and hideous, grinning idols, proclaimed the living God. In one such temple, Harvard, one of the English missionaries, stood with his hand upon the great idol of idols, the veritable “Light of Asia,” and fearlessly announced: “We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and there is none other God but one!” A tumult at once arose, and it seemed as if he would be overpowered, perhaps killed, but the wonderful pathos and power of his words prevailed. Some fell at his feet, weeping and imploring, while gradually the truths spoken made their way into many a poor dazed brain. He had now mastered the language and could speak to them as the priests spoke, but of what different things! Converts came in slowly at first, but as the knowledge spread, as one was enabled to convey it to another, as the missionaries through their command of the language gained more power over the natives,

it was no uncommon thing for scores of these degraded souls to be brought to Christ at one time. Many of the priests, too, were converted; and then indeed did the Methodist mission begin to gain bone and sinew. One by one the great temples were abandoned to the moles and the bats. In seven years from the time of the coming of the first Methodist missionaries, out of the five hundred temples found in Batticola alone scarcely one hundred were open for worship. Never has Methodism written for herself a more glorious chapter than this of her first mission-work amidst the palm-groves of these "dusky isles of the sea."

For one hundred years the East India Company kept up its fierce and persistent fight against missionaries, but it had to give way at last. Reason, justice, humanity, all Christianity demanded it. They had already begun to weaken when Coke's little band of missionaries came to plant Methodism in Ceylon. At last, in 1819, Thomas Lynch and John Horner, two bold Wesleyan missionaries, were permitted to enter the Continent, there to firmly plant the standard of their faith—the one at Madras, and the other at Bombay. Of the stirring and thrilling scenes that marked the inauguration of Methodism at both places we have not the space to speak. Four years later the grand old banner was planted at yet another place—Negapatam; and a year later at still another place, until by 1823 there were four stations "like light-houses on that far-reaching coast."

Not long after occurred the conversion of Arumaga

Tambiran, a Brahman of the highest rank, whose coming over to the new religion shook his native city to its foundations, and rekindled hope and enthusiasm in the hearts of the toiling missionaries. Society was at first paralyzed at the news of Arumaga's change of faith, then aroused to indignation and even vengeance against him. It soon became so that he could not walk upon the streets without being attacked. When for the last time he came to lay aside the "Brahminical cord and robe," it was to be greeted with groans and hisses wherever he went. But though pale he was calm; and as soon as he could gain opportunity for speech he thus addressed the angry multitude: "As a heathen I got money in abundance, and honors. I abandon heathenism. I wish to teach others of this Saviour." And teach them he did, in so sweet and so gentle a way that enemies became friends and former traducers earnest suppliants at his feet.

Arumaga was a man of education and talent. In addition to preaching, he began to write. One of his efforts was a poem against heathenism. Thousands of copies were printed and scattered abroad, and through their instrumentality hundreds of souls were won. Arumaga himself used to walk through the streets distributing them. One glorious proof of his genuine conversion was that he had overcome every particle of his former pride. He who in the old days would have shrunk from the touch of some of these people, even upon the hem of his robe, now grasped them tightly by the hand, and with the

tears rolling over his cheeks passionately urged them to come to this new-found Saviour, so infinitely able, so abundantly willing to be a Saviour to *all*.

* * *

ON THE SHORES OF AFRICA.

IN his burning zeal for missions, Coke's great, glowing Methodist heart longed to encompass the whole world. He early looked toward Africa, the darkest of dark continents—saw her needs, and yearned to meet them. Through his efforts mechanics were sent thither in 1795 to instruct the natives in some of the arts of civilization. To first prepare the ground and then to sow the seed was Coke's idea. These artisans took up their abode among the Forelahs on the west coast of Africa. They were a wild and ignorant tribe, but not so cruel and blood-thirsty as the majority of their countrymen. Either through lack of zeal on one side, or utter indifference on the other—may be both combined—this scheme met with utter failure. Coke determined to try again, and this time to send the gospel to blaze the way for civilization, instead of the woodman's ax.

The second attempt was almost as much of a failure as the first. The evangelists made a little headway, it is true, but it was to meet with defeat at last. Doubtless God's hand was in it all, for the first real mission of Methodism among the inhabitants of the Dark Continent was to be founded by their own people. The story of this mission reads like a romance, only no romance was ever so strengthening or stirring.

When the daring Garretson struggled through the waist-deep snows and crossed rivers on blocks of floating ice and pushed his way into the inhospitable wilds of Nova Scotia, he found there a company of refugee slaves from the United States. He was surprised to discover that many of them had already imbibed the principles of Methodism from hearing some of the first preachers. It was no difficult matter to organize them into a class. Garretson preached to them several times, and many genuine conversions occurred among them.

In the year 1792 twelve hundred of these slaves were carried to Sierra Leone in Africa. Here the seeds of Methodism sown among them burst into full bloom, glorifying all that savage region. Soon after the work began two white local preachers, by the name of Brown and Gordon, went out to their help. But as earnest as were the labors of these men, no such glorious results could have been attained but for the efforts of the Christianized negroes themselves. They were among the best of their race—earnest, faithful, and intelligent. Day after day the palm-groves resounded with their prayers, the tropic winds swept onward and upward the sweet incense of their evening hymns, while the fire of their devotion burned on as steadily as the sacred flames upon the altars of the priests of old. Hundreds of poor, wild, half-naked creatures came, prostrating themselves and seeking succor from these, the more fortunate of their race. The fires of the Methodist faith had been kindled on the altar of the living God in

the heart of Africa by the hands of its own once savage people.

So rapidly did the good work spread, so pressing—nay, so painfully great—became the need of more workers in this vineyard, that in 1806 Brown wrote to Coke a most pathetic letter, entreating further ministerial aid. In the meantime a great native preacher had been raised up, one of those who had come from Nova Scotia—Mingo Jordan. Soon a chapel was built, and then another; but not yet could they accommodate the throngs that pressed to the preaching, and they were compelled to fall back upon the palm-groves as their temples of worship.

At one time Mingo Jordan baptized as many as twenty maroons—half-breeds. Such a thrilling sight had never before been witnessed in that savage land. Other heart-stirring scenes continued to be added to the record. Chiefs forsook their idols, and medicine-men threw away their fetiches, mothers came with babes closely clasped in their arms—babes like those that had previously been sacrificed in horrid orgies; all, all came to Christ, at the rate of a score or more in a day.

At the time under notice Sierra Leone was described as a “terrible place.” With full justice it might have been called “a *horrible* place.” The slave-trade was at its height, each day marked by some awful picture that might well be drawn in lines of blood. All the horrors seemed to culminate at Sierra Leone. No wonder it had seemed for years “a place accursed.” Hundreds of miserable creatures,

escaping from their cruel drivers, fled back toward their homes, but, being almost invariably recaptured, were brought to Sierra Leone for final disposition—either to be sent on in the slave-ships or to be cruelly put to death before the eyes of others as a warning. As the pen lingers over these scenes, halting with horror at every line, one cannot help but ask the question, “*Could* the authors of such cruelty have been human beings, men made in the image of a just and merciful God?” Surely every trace of that Maker’s image must have been struck from the hearts of such creatures as these!

At one time there were representatives from as many as two hundred different African tribes, “each with its own language and savagery,” landed in Sierra Leone or brought from the interior. What a scene of confusion, of woe and misery, it must have presented! Sometimes where there was such a mass of unkempt, filthy humanity packed in together—for these slaves, even if they had desired it, were not given the opportunities for cleanliness—that deadly epidemic diseases broke out and raged. Added to this, the latitude was very inimical to foreigners who came without any attempt at acclimation. It is no wonder then that of the missionaries who came some died at once, while the most of them could not stand it but a year or two at best. With all these serious drawbacks, however, Methodism continued to grow, even as a thrifty and hardy plant that has set its roots in an uncongenial soil. Perhaps never before had the noble old faith attempted to make its way

through such surroundings as these; yet, thank God, it did not flinch. From the moment of its birth in the hearts of that immortal little band at Oxford to the present, when full five and a half million souls stand enlisted under its banner, hardships, persecutions, pestilence, *death* have been the common enemies of Methodism, intrepidly met and conquered.

Of the twenty maroons baptized by Jordan each began almost immediately to give two cents a day toward the carrying of the gospel into other desolate parts. The first missionary society in missionary lands! the "widow's mite" of the heathen that other heathen might be saved! What an example to some of us who refuse to give even of our more than "mite," or give grudgingly what we do give!

The blessed light continued to spread. From Sierra Leone it went into Senegambia, and here and there it gained a convert among the savage tribes of Bambarra. And it spread not only north and east, but also southward until it came into the borders of Ashantee Land, "the darkest land on earth." The most sluggish pulse must stir at the reading of this record of how one Freeman, an humble and lowly-born African—but an earnest Wesleyan preacher—boldly, with no thought of self, with all for Christ, carried his Methodism even into the inner courts of Coomassie, where reigned in blood and horror the most heartless and cruel of all the savage African kings.

The story relates how certain young natives, hearing the missionaries preach at Sierra Leone, came

upon some loose pages of the Scriptures, which had been read to them in their own language. They carried the precious leaves with them back to Cape Coast Castle, and meeting with a pious sea-captain there, some time afterward, they showed him their treasure. Again were the leaves read to them, and not only these but many others from the captain's own pocket Bible. The heart of the man was touched by this yearning, and on his return to England he offered to take a missionary out to Cape Coast Castle free of charge. His offer was gladly accepted by the Wesleyan societies, and John Dunnell was sent. But, alas! in six months he was dead—a victim to the dread fever—yet not before those brave lads, who had so faithfully cherished the few worn Scripture leaves were converted. They heroically kept on with the work—a chapel was built, and scores of converts were brought into a society. “We *will* remain in the new profession!” they declared with great earnestness: “we *will* proclaim the gospel! for though the missionary is dead, *God lives!*”

Another missionary was sent—another, and yet another, until five had perished. Methodism was to pay dearly indeed for her establishment in this heathen land. It being impossible for the white man to withstand the terrors of the climate, a preacher of their own race and color was now sent—one who had been carried over to England for education and training. On coming to Cape Coast Castle, Freeman found six chapels, and four hundred and fifty members in the different societies; for though the missionaries who

preceded him had met an early death, they left their monuments behind them.

Freeman penetrated into the interior hundreds of miles farther than the foot of a missionary had ever trod. He was determined on reaching the King of Coomassie, of whom so many dreadful stories had been told him. The more kindly disposed of the natives tried to turn Freeman back from his mad project of preaching the gospel in the town of this bloody king. They told him it would be certain death to put himself in the king's power; but he resolutely pressed on to the forbidden destination.

He at last entered Coomassie, "passing between two mounds, under each of which had been buried a living man, to prevent the coming 'fetich-man' from doing harm." Instead of offering violence to Freeman, the king had come to fear him. From the many wonderful stories that had found their way to the court of Coomassie, Freeman was regarded as a great "fetich-man," in constant communication with mighty spirits capable of doing any thing they wished. Hoping to appease this dread messenger of mighty spirits, great sacrifices were ordered by the king, as many as forty lives being sacrificed the first day. Faint with the horror of it all, Freeman yet dared not say any thing for fear of losing the ground already gained. Amidst these terrible scenes he bravely began preaching. At his first meeting, greatly to his surprise and joy, one convert was given him—"a man who had heard of Christianity, and now wished to profess it." The king was at first amazed, then perplexed, and finally deeply troubled.

Soon Coomassie, the awful, "the very abode of spirits in prison," witnessed the Christian baptism of its bloody king—a scene to make the very courts of heaven ring with joy! But the good work did not stop here; it went on, and on. The king asked for a permanent mission among his people, and a school. Two of his sons were afterward sent to England to be educated. They returned to help in the glorious harvest that was now bending far and wide. Soon "a thousand were hearing the gospel in Satan's seat at Coomassie." Never had the banner of Methodism waved from a stormier battlement!





ROBERT STRAWBRIDGE.

(272)

IN AMERICA.

THE ROSE IN THE WILDERNESS.

WE have seen how the spread of Methodism through the British kingdom called forth storms of persecution from both clergy and people. It was no wonder then that many of those who saw life and property in danger should have desired to take refuge in a country which offered to rich and poor alike the great boon of personal and religious liberty—the new continent of America.

Among the first of those to emigrate, if not *the* first, was a hardy, quick-witted, and bold-spirited young Irishman by the name of Robert Strawbridge. He was a native of Drumsnagh, near the river Shannon, in County Leitrim, Ireland, and was among the first of those in that section of the country converted to Methodism through the efforts of Wesley's devoted itinerants. Never had cause a more zealous advocate than he became from that time. But with all his zeal and piety, little did he dream, on landing in the city of New York in 1760, that *his* was to be the first hand to plant on American soil the hardy shoot of the faith he represented. Three years later it was to burst into beauty and bloom—a veritable rose in the wilderness.

It is well known that another spot and another

name lay claim to the honor of being *the first* in American Methodism, but a careful and unbiased search among all the records has shown that while Barbara Heck and Philip Embury began in New York a work that was the sooner known and extended over a wider field in the shorter time, yet to Robert Strawbridge, beyond a doubt, is due *the priority* of planting Methodism in America; and this was at Sam's Creek in Maryland, not far from the site of the present city of Baltimore. Two points in the records especially go to show this, if nothing else does, and there are *many others*. One of these is that the beginning of Strawbridge's preaching in his humble log-cabin in the wilds of Maryland *antedates that of Embury in New York by several years*; for while Strawbridge began almost upon his arrival, in 1760, we have no account of Embury's preaching until 1766. Indeed, it was in this year that Barbara Heck first stirred him up to a realization of his duty. Their church—that is, the church in New York City—was not built until 1768; whereas that of Strawbridge—the memorable “Old Log-cabin Meeting-house”—was erected in 1764, which made it unquestionably “*the first Methodist Church in America.*” The other incontrovertible proof is in the record left by Bishop Asbury that the society formed by Robert Strawbridge in his humble log-cabin on the banks of Sam's Creek was “*the first society in Maryland and in America.*”

How cheerily that Maryland forest must have rung with the sturdy blows of the brave young woodman's

ax! Little he dreamed, as he felled the stout logs that were to form his log-cabin meeting-house, that he was laying the foundations of another building that in time was to become one of the grandest spiritual houses of the whole American Continent.

The "Log-cabin Meeting-house" stood just a mile from the rude home of its builder. It was not a very church-like structure. Indeed, if it could be seen along-side some of our fine modern church-buildings, it would provoke a smile even from those more disposed to honor it for its sacred associations. It had "neither door, windows, nor floor"—only holes where the windows ought to have been, and a rudely-hewn opening for the door. The seats were of puncheon with peg supports, many of the latter not of the straightest sort; while the pulpit was a rough box-like structure, guiltless of any contact of plane or chisel. But humble and rude as it was, it was God's house, and doubtless more so than many of the stately buildings of to-day where from year's end to year's end so few souls are born *wholly* unto Christ. Amidst its wilderness surroundings it stood as purely apart as the flower that gladdens the eye in some chill, inhospitable place—"a thing of beauty," that "is a joy forever."

Strawbridge became the pastor of his own church, for outside the "droning, dragging" clergymen of the Establishment there was no other at hand to break the bread to a starving people. His style of preaching proved a novelty indeed compared with that of the cold, soulless efforts of these spiritually dead

clergymen. He preached as only one with a warm Irish heart and an eloquent tongue could preach, and great was the awakening even in that sparsely settled country.

On the days and nights of his regular services his "Log-cabin Meeting-house" was taxed to its utmost capacity. Many a genuine Methodist shout echoed among its rafters; many a slumbering soul, touched by the true spirit of Methodism, prostrated itself at the rude altar of logs, thence to rise in the power of the glad new birth.

Strawbridge did not confine his preaching to this church. Other parts of Maryland felt the effects of his itinerancy. He even went into Virginia and Pennsylvania. The work spread; the rose blossomed, extending its petals here and there in rich, refreshing perfume. But in the meantime, while others were made happy and blessed, Strawbridge's own family suffered—not spiritually, but for the necessities of life. Although a poor man, he was neither lazy nor improvident. He felt that his devotion to the Master's cause must be held above all else. Everywhere around him men were perishing for the bread of life. How much more important this than the needs of the body! He did not willfully resign his family to want, for he could neither have been a man nor a Christian in the noblest sense if he had done that; but he had the utmost faith that while he was away, doing God's work, God would provide for those at home dependent upon his care; and God always did.

Often, on mounting his horse to go into some distant settlement in his ministration to souls, his good Irish wife—with tears in her eyes which she tried in vain to restrain—would say to him that there was not a scrap of any thing to eat in the house. Invariably he would comfort her with a kiss and the assurance: “Fret not, dear wife, meat and bread will be sent here to-day.” And meat and bread were sent; for his neighbors, seeing the faith and devotion of the man who made every earthly sacrifice to feed the hungry souls of his fellow-men, took care that his family should not suffer.

In 1766, through the deed of a generous and wealthy Marylander, Captain Charles Ridgely, the zealous evangelist was given the life lease of a splendid farm, which could be easily managed by his wife and children; and from that time Strawbridge was left untrammelled in his work of winning souls.

Many of his converts became preachers, like himself. Among them was Richard Owen, the first native Methodist preacher of America. At the death of Strawbridge, in 1781, Owen preached his funeral sermon to a large concourse of weeping people under the branches of a wide-spreading tree in the yard of his house. The body was interred in an orchard near by, there to await the resurrection of the just.

The hand that planted the rose in the wilderness had withered, but the rose itself remained to bless and cheer the souls of men.

THE HANDFUL OF CORN IN THE EARTH. •

There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon; and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." (Psalm lxii. 16.)

IN the same year that Robert Strawbridge began his journey into the wilderness of Maryland, another ship bearing Irish emigrants—this time from the port of Limerick—landed at New York. The most of these emigrants were what were known as "Irish Palatines," the descendants of a much persecuted people driven years before from their homes in Germany by that vindictive enemy of the Protestant faith, Louis XIV. of France. He had laid waste their fair lands, applied the torch to their homes, and then drove them forth at the point of the sword. About fifty of these families had taken refuge in Ireland, at Ballagarrane near Limerick. There, in 1758, Wesley and his fellow-itinerants had found them, converted many, and left a flourishing society. Among these converts were a young man named Philip Embury, and his cousin, Mrs. Barbara Heck, some years older than himself. Young Embury had been ordained a preacher by Wesley, and for more than a year previous to his departure for America had done brave and earnest work for Methodism.

A desire to possess some of the fruitful lands of the new continent offered free to settlers, as well as a longing to enjoy greater personal and religious freedom, had led these people to America. But in the light of subsequent events we cannot doubt that the

hand of God directed at least two of these emigrants.

The ship reached New York on August 10, 1760—henceforth an eventful day in the history of American Methodism. The emigrants scattered in various directions, as their present inclinations or previous arrangements dictated; but a goodly number remained in New York, among them Philip Embury and Barbara Heck. The strange phases of life in this new country caused the Methodist faith of several of this little company to grow strangely cold. Even Embury himself felt an apathy creeping upon him. Naturally he was an active man, and so far as his calling was concerned—that of a carpenter—he kept energetically at it; but spiritually he allowed his feelings to become sadly choked by the daily cares and responsibilities with which he was now surrounded. For nearly six years he let the time go by without speaking a word for his Master. Doubtless this would have continued until Philip Embury, the future preacher and one of the founders of Methodism in America, would have been lost in plain Philip Embury, the unknown carpenter; but the Lord put it into the heart of brave Barbara Heck to stir up this sleeping soul to a realization of its duty, and to go onward to the high honors of its calling.

One day the pious soul of the good Barbara was deeply shocked by coming upon a party of her relatives and friends engaged in playing cards. With a sense of duty that thrilled her whole being and lent her strength and courage to act, she advanced to the

table and seizing the well-worn bits of pasteboard swept them into the fire. Then turning upon the offenders, with a majesty that gave her the air of an outraged queen, she told them in scathing tones what she thought of such conduct. With her soul still aflame she hastened to Embury's house, in what is now known as Park Place, and with flashing eyes and lips that faltered not laid before him his duty: "Cousin Philip, you must keep silent no longer! You *must* preach the word, or we shall all go to hell together, and God will require our blood at your hands!"

Shocked at what he heard, yet overcome with a timidity that years of spiritual sloth had strengthened, he began to make all manner of excuses. The old fire had deserted him; his tongue was tied—it seemed well-nigh impossible for him to speak; besides, no one would care to listen if he spoke. With the power of the Spirit in her heart and upon her lips, Barbara swept away excuse after excuse; but still he resisted. "I cannot preach, for I have neither a house nor a congregation," was his final plea. "But *that* need not hinder you. You must begin at once, here in your own house to your own people," was the decisive rejoinder.

He could hold out no further. The voice of the Spirit that he had so long rejected began to make itself heard within his heart. The Master had called, in tones unmistakable. He dared no longer disobey. In his own home, then, Embury preached the first Methodist sermon in New York, and, next to Straw-

bridge's, the first in America. Small indeed was his congregation—only four persons besides the faithful Barbara. But as a handful of corn buried in the earth, this humble beginning was destined in time to bring forth such fruit as should “shake like Lebanon,” causing “them of the city” to “flourish as grass.” As we to-day contemplate the vast harvest that has sprung from those first small germs—the congregation of five in Embury's house in Park Place, New York, and the handful of faithful souls gathered within that rude log structure on the banks of Sam's Creek, Maryland—how we are constrained to exclaim, “Behold, what *hath* God wrought!”

Soon Embury's house could not contain the crowd that gathered to hear him preach. A society had already been formed. The great, pressing need was only too evident—a larger place must be had for the services. But where? A room was at length hired, and to meet the expenses a collection was taken up at each meeting. It will doubtless interest the young reader to learn that at one of these meetings a little boy put the first sixpence he had ever earned into the collection-plate to help pay the rent of the room. Was ever a child's offering sent upon a nobler mission? This little boy was Paul Heck, the true son of a noble mother.

Not long after Embury began preaching in this room, on a Sunday morning when it was unusually crowded, a sensation was caused by the sudden appearance in their midst of a tall officer in the scarlet uniform of the king's army. He wore a cloth shade

over one eye, and had a sword belted at his side. The people were alarmed by his presence. They thought him a spy, and momentarily expected to see him rise up in the meeting and order the services to stop. But his manner soon indicated a far different intention. He showed a spirit of intense devotion all through the services. He stood up when they sung, and joined with them; he knelt reverently during the prayer, and paid the closest attention all through the sermon. The uneasy feeling of the congregation soon began to subside. It entirely disappeared when at the close of the sermon they saw him step up to Embury, take him by the hand, and speak to him words something like these: "My name is Thomas Webb. I am a captain in the king's army. I am also a soldier of the cross, and a follower of John Wesley. I heard of you at Albany, where I live, the master of the barracks there, and I have come to New York to see if I could do any thing to help you."* We may well believe that these words cheered the heart of every one who heard them, especially that of the preacher.

Captain Webb was no "holiday soldier." He had seen real battle. With Wolf he had climbed the Heights of Abraham. At Louisburg a ball had passed through his right eye and down his throat. Fainting from pain and the loss of blood, he came near being left upon the field as dead. At the battle of Quebec he had been shot through the arm.

* Dr. Wise, in "Founders of American Methodism."

But the most lasting wound he received was that inflicted eight years afterward at Bristol, England, under the preaching of John Wesley. It was a wound that brought its own sweet relief, however, and made this true soldier a still more courageous "captain of salvation."

The joy of the little band was great when they learned that Captain Webb was a regularly ordained minister, having been appointed by Wesley himself. The preaching of this bold soldier was indeed a turning-point in American Methodism. Without the intention to usurp the place of any other, and willingly accorded that place by the generous and less able Embury, Captain Webb soon became the head of the society in New York. His great eloquence, his state-ly appearance, his flaming zeal, which seemed to burn its way into the hearts of his listeners, gave him a hold upon the people which Embury, though equally as earnest and devoted, would perhaps never have attained. It was truly inspiring to see this battle-scarred soldier preaching, his tall form clothed in its scarlet uniform, and his sword lying across the Bible.

Webb's congregations soon grew too large for the hired room, and again it was necessary to seek other and larger quarters. The place next engaged was a rigging-loft in Williams street, some sixty feet long by eighteen wide; yet so hungry were the people for the "word of life," and to such an extent did Webb's popularity continue to increase, that this place soon failed to accommodate the immense crowds.

Then said Captain Webb: "We must build a chapel!" But how? Though rich in numbers, the society was sadly lacking in means. Even Embury had only the income from his daily labor. Then up rose brave Barbara Heck again, at the crisis when she was most needed, and through her own faith and courage pointed out the way. Said she: "Trust in God; he will build the chapel." And she forthwith began devising a plan by which to raise the money. It succeeded beyond their most sanguine expectations, for God prospered the work. The plan was to raise money by subscriptions. Captain Webb, who had some means, headed the list with a donation of thirty pounds. (The paper bearing the names of its two hundred and fifty subscribers—rich and poor, white and black—is still preserved.)

This "first Wesley chapel of American Methodism" was built in a quaint style. The structure was of stone, forty-two feet by sixty. It had a fireplace and a chimney. Embury's own hands made the pulpit, which was a marvelous piece of work for those days. The seats had no backs, and the galleries no "breastwork" or stairs, being reached by a ladder. There was no organ, no choir; first one and then another "set the tune," while the rest joined in. At the opening of this church nearly a thousand people crowded the building and yard. "They of the city" had already begun to flourish as the grass that covers the earth. From thence this gospel was to spread in untold beauty and vigor into every city and hamlet of the whole American continent.



CAPTAIN THOMAS WEBB.

WEBB AND PILMOOR IN PHILADELPHIA.

THE torch of Methodism was first kindled in Philadelphia by brave Captain Webb. He carried it there in 1768. The humble beginning was in a sail-loft, where a class of seven was formed. Two years later, so steadily had the flame burned, so widely had it increased, the procuring of a church became an absolute necessity. This led to the purchase of a house which was fitted up and known as "St. George's Chapel," the first Methodist church in Philadelphia.

The building had been used by the German Reformed Society. For a long time it remained just as it was when first purchased by the Methodists, "unfinished and unfurnished." It was only half floored, and that with the roughest of boards. On the north side was the pulpit, which was nothing more than a rude, square box. But after awhile it was floored from end to end, fitted with "more comely seats" and a pulpit which stood like "a tub on a post"—a style very prevalent in the early Methodist churches, but one of the most ungainly imaginable. This pulpit, which was the very ugliest of its kind, could hold but one person at a time, and there the poor man had to stand, cramped as to room and not daring to move lest through some untoward twist of the body he should fall out of his tub. But many a genuine old Methodist sermon, ringing with eloquence and aflame with zeal, ascended from these tub-like structures. Many a fierce onslaught was made against the hosts of sin even in these cramped quarters.

As rude and ungainly in its appointments as this

structure was, it remained for nearly fifty years the largest and most pretentious place of worship the Methodists had in America. These early Methodists were not ashamed of this grand "old cathedral," nor disposed to replace it by a newer and finer structure. So simple and devout were they—so much more did they care for the inner beauty of holiness than for outward display:

At last the two missionaries sent by Wesley reached America, landing in Philadelphia in 1769. These two were Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor. Both were in the prime of life—Boardman, the elder, being but thirty-one years old.

Boardman went at once to New York, Pilmoor remaining in Philadelphia to become its first street missionary of Methodism. He was cordially received by Captain Webb and his society of one hundred members, and bidden Godspeed.

Pilmoor's first sermon was preached from the steps of the old State-house on Chestnut street. It was such a sermon and such a scene as have been the glory of Methodism through every step of its onward march for a century and a half.

Pilmoor's next preaching-place was from the judges' platform in front of the race-course on the common in what is now known as Franklin Square, Race street. Never had that race-ground witnessed such a scene as this. Instead of the coarse oaths of betting men, the noisy shouts of the criers, the thud of flying horses' feet, the tumultuous cries of the spectators—all of which had made a perfect Babel of the

place—there were now the deep, ringing tones of one earnest man pleading for the acceptance of a gospel of love and peace. He had between four and five thousand hearers. Many were the marvelous incidents that occurred, the Lord's work among them being truly wonderful. Men knelt upon the ground, in the very tracks of the horses, and cried aloud for pardon and mercy. Others pressed up about the preacher as he stood on the judges' stand, importuning him to show them how to make their eternal peace with the great Judge of all.

"Blessed be God for field-preaching!" cried the young evangelist. He wrote to Wesley: "There seems to be a great and effectual door opening in this country." Truly there was—a door through which millions of rescued souls were to enter in after years.

In Philadelphia both Boardman and Pilmoor had the happiness of meeting with Whitefield, then on his seventh visit to America. The great evangelist was little more than alive, but the fire of resolution burned within his soul as brightly as ever. In the young evangelists he lived over his early trials and triumphs. In Pilmoor, preaching to the thirsting crowds from the State-house steps, or standing upon the judges' platform in the race-course, Whitefield saw himself, with lips that flamed, discoursing to the surging multitudes from the balcony of the old courthouse, or upon Society Hill relentlessly charging the flying hosts.

Pilmoor remained in Philadelphia for some time, continuing his street-preaching in the face of every

difficulty, and often surrounded by danger. But out of this sacrifice and toil came at last the whitened harvest. Methodism spread so rapidly in Philadelphia that by 1773 the vigorous young Quaker City was deemed in every way worthy of the honor of entertaining the first Conference of American Methodism.



THE FIRST METHODIST SERMON IN BALTIMORE.

IN 1768 the little Methodist society in New York had written to Wesley begging him to send them "an able, experienced preacher," as Captain Webb was unable now to be much with them, and Embury was on the point of removing to another part of the country. They declared their willingness to "sell their coats and shirts" to procure the passage-money for this preacher.

The ardor of these people kindled a responsive flame in the breasts of their British brethren, who promptly began the preparation of sending them not only one preacher but two. However, before these missionaries could be sent, two men came on their own responsibility. These were Robert Williams, who founded Methodism in Virginia, and John King, the apostle of the same faith in the Middle States.

King was a young man, but as brave and determined a soldier as ever bore his Master's banner over the seas. His first appearance as a Methodist preacher was in Philadelphia, where he early distinguished himself by preaching surrounded by the

lowly mounds of the paupers in Potter's Field. The career thus nobly begun, in this humblest of sanctuaries, over the graves of the poor, was one of eminent usefulness. King assisted Robert Strawbridge in Maryland, and among the first-fruits of his efforts there was the conversion of James J. Baker—a name henceforth historic in the annals of Maryland Methodism.

Standing upon a horse-block, in front of a blacksmith's shop, at the intersection of Baltimore and Calvert streets, King preached the first Methodist sermon ever delivered in Baltimore. It was "training-day," and in addition to the numerous militia companies the town was crowded with people of every description. Whisky flowed freely, and noisy street brawls were constantly occurring.

Boldly taking his stand upon the block, hymn-book in hand, King began giving out a hymn. This unusual proceeding soon attracted a large and curious crowd. They came at first without any great boisterousness, but as soon as it was whispered through the ranks that the scene had a religious tendency, the evil spirit broke out in all directions. The crowd yelled so as to drown the preacher's voice, then made threats; but seeing that he kept on with his service, they charged upon him, upset his block, and threw him violently to the ground. Brushing himself free of dirt, and regardless of bruises, he once more took his stand on the upturned block. Again the crowd charged, yelling and cursing like demons. But this time the commander of the troops, an Englishman,

took King's part, saying he should preach if he wanted to, and no one should interfere. Thus protected, King went on with his sermon, pouring broadsides into the enemy's ranks, and in the end so winning upon the better-minded people as to be invited to preach in the English Church of St. Paul's. This invitation he gladly accepted, but, it is said, preached with such true Methodist fire as to win no repetition of the courtesy. But he had carried Methodism into Baltimore, and given it permanent refuge there. The bold charge made on that "field-day" had planted the banner of the cross upon the citadel of what was to become the chief city of American Methodism. Only five years from the time of King's first sermon there Baltimore was chosen as the place for holding the American Conference.



THE SOUND OF ARMS IN NEW JERSEY.

BOARDMAN'S route to New York lay through New Jersey. One evening, after a long day's toilsome journey, he came in view of a good-sized town—supposed to have been Trenton—upon a prominent site of which he saw a large military barracks. Scarcely divining the intention formed in his mind, Boardman rode toward it. On his way he met one of the soldiers, who saluted him cordially. Boardman stopped to ask a few questions. Among the first was, "Are there any Methodists in town?" He scarcely expected a favorable answer, but the soldier's face brightened as he replied: "Yes, we are all Method-

ists; and I suppose by your looks that you are a Methodist preacher. If so, we will be glad to hear you."

Boardman found that the soldier spoke truly. They were all Methodists at the barracks—a company of bold warriors of a heavenly as well as an earthly king. Captain Webb had been there, and his flaming Methodist zeal had been communicated to his comrades.

The trooper hastened ahead of the preacher, and soon the glad intelligence that a Methodist preacher was coming had spread throughout the quarters. It was spirit-stirring to see the men drawn up in line to greet Boardman as he rode through the gate-way. "Where can I preach?" was almost his first question. "We will get you the Presbyterian church," was the confident reply. And sure enough the bell was soon set to ringing—not the first nor the last Presbyterian bell to ring its glad summons for a Methodist meeting.

Boardman's pulses were requickened, the fire in his heart set newly aflame as he saw these bold Methodist soldiers marching by, file after file, on their way to the preaching. They filled most of the space within the building; but there were others present besides these soldiers in their brilliant uniforms.

Boardman's gospel message evoked many cheery responses and hearty amens, which sent him on his way to New York happy in the love and service of his Lord.

Thus amidst the sounds of arms, in the camp of

the soldier, did Methodism find its way into New Jersey, there to become, unlike the suggestions of its first surroundings, a symbol of peace and love.

* * *

THE REVIVAL FLAME IN VIRGINIA.

It was the Rev. Robert Williams who planted Methodism in the proud old State of Virginia. On reaching America, in 1769, Williams is described as being "almost as poor as his Divine Master." He sold his horse to pay his debts, and took passage for the new country with naught but a pair of saddlebags, which contained a few pieces of clothing, a loaf of bread, and a bottle of milk. Standing in the court-house door in the town of Norfolk in the year 1772, he preached the first Methodist sermon ever heard in Virginia. Some thought him crazy, others that he was trying to draw attention to himself to serve some selfish end. Disgust was plainly written upon the faces of those who hurried on after the first glance; curiosity upon those of the few who remained. They thought it a rich joke to speak of it to each other as "a monkey performance." Finishing his hymn, Williams knelt to pray, then began his sermon. As soon as the more evil-disposed found that "the performance" was of a religious character, antagonism ran high. They began to laugh, to talk, to whistle, to cry out, and tried in every way to silence him. Some even threw stones and sticks. Williams coolly preached on. In describing the scene afterward, some of them said of him: "Sometimes he would

preach, then he would pray, then he would swear, and at other times he would sing." It is supposed that as these people were unaccustomed to hearing the preacher so freely use the words "devil" and "hell," they termed this "swearing."

That night Williams slept upon the ground, for no one had a thought of asking him home. The next day he preached again upon the same spot, but with more encouraging results. A few were sincerely awakened—many made uneasy in their conscience. Both man and beast were provided with entertainment that second night. Soon after this, Williams formed the first Methodist society in Virginia. It is a remarkable coincidence that the Methodists of that State, without knowing it at the time, afterward built their first house of worship upon the very spot where stood the court-house in the door of which Williams had preached his first sermon.

Williams crossed from Norfolk into Portsmouth, and there under two persimmon-trees preached to a goodly throng. It was an impressive scene, for, through the efforts of one who had been awakened by his preaching in Norfolk, many came to hear him gladly. Williams continued to preach, both in Norfolk and Portsmouth, sometimes in private houses, but oftener in the open air. Everywhere the people were awakened, though many still continued to fight the new doctrine with fierce persistency. Especially was this the case among the wealthy and the gay. They had too long led a life of indolence and ease to be thus rudely awakened from it. Throughout al-

most the entire colony, with the exception of the great awakenings among the Presbyterians and the Baptists, religion had been for years nothing but a name. The prevailing worship, as is known, was that of the Establishment, or Episcopal Church. In the sketches of pioneer Methodism in Great Britain we have seen what class of men these clergymen usually were. They were no better in America—even worse, if that were possible—betting, gambling, and attending horse-races with the coolness of professional gamesters.

The greater part of the colony of Virginia at that day was composed of wealthy planters and their families. They rode in luxurious coaches, drove fine horses, gave magnificent dinners, entertained distinguished visitors, from the Governor down, swore roundly on all occasions—the men of the family, of course—led vicious, profligate lives, caring about as much for *pure* religion as the heathen who sat in the regions of darkness. It is true they were regular in their attendance upon the church services, going thither in great state; but so far their devotion went and no farther. It is not to be wondered at then that to such a people the idea of an active, working, life-defining religion came like a thunder-clap. They were first aroused to the danger of Methodism if allowed to creep in upon their indolent, careless lives, and then into fierce opposition at the encroachment. But Methodism flourished in Virginia under all these adverse conditions.

In 1775 a great religious upheaval began on the

Brunswick Circuit, and rapidly extended to other parts. Everywhere the revival fires blazed with the glorious effect that divine power alone could give. People flocked to the meetings by day and by night—the rich planter in his carriage, the poor land-tender on foot, or perhaps himself, wife, and children all perched upon the one horse. In these meetings young Jesse Lee first began to show the superior force that was in him; but the great leading spirit was George Shadford, a young English preacher destined to do great things for Methodism in Virginia.

The people of the neighborhoods in which these revivals first occurred had long been notorious for the exceedingly wicked life they led. Immoralities of the worst sort abounded. They gambled, they swore, they fought duels, they engaged in horse-races, and took delight in showing their utter contempt for every thing of a religious character. But the hand of the Lord was turned toward them, and when it fell it fell heavily.

As the meetings progressed chapels and private houses were alike crowded with anxious, stricken hearers. Some of the convictions were indeed wonderful manifestations of the Lord's power; others again were awful to contemplate in the first agonies of awakened sin. "Mercy! mercy!" "God have mercy!" were the cries that resounded on all sides. Sometimes the services would last for hours, often through an entire day and night. Men, women, and children were pierced by the arrow of conviction, and fell lifeless as it were before the Lord. Through a

circle of three or four hundred miles this revival flame swept on with sin-consuming power.

In the beginning of May of the next year there was another revival of astonishing results at Boisseau's Chapel, in Dinwiddie county. "At that meeting," writes Jesse Lee, "the windows of heaven were opened indeed, and the rain of divine influence continued to pour down for more than forty days.

On the second day, at love-feast, the demonstrations were truly wonderful. The whole assembly seemed to feel the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, but the most remarkable scene occurred just as the love-feast closed. The doors were thrown open that the crowd outside might enter. As they pressed in and saw the evidences of divine power in those present and heard their shouts of joy, they began to drop upon their knees, crying aloud for the same experience. One by one these souls were reclaimed. Soon the night began to shut down, but no thought of discontinuing the love-feast was entertained. Candles were sent for, and the preaching and praying and shouting went on. "When I left them," says Jesse Lee, "about the setting of the sun, their prayers and cries might have been heard a mile off."

In the summer of the same year, at Boisseau's Chapel, during a sermon preached by that bold soldier of the cross, Thomas Rankin, such power descended that hundreds fell to the ground, and "the house seemed to shake with the presence of God." The building was filled to its utmost capacity, while hundreds stood without. "Look wherever we would,"

says a writer, "we saw nothing but streaming eyes and faces bathed in tears, and heard nothing but groans and strong cries after God." In vain the preachers attempted either to sing, pray, or exhort. Every time their voices were silenced by the cries and groans around them. They could do nothing but sit in the pulpit and, filled with the divine presence, exclaim: "This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven!"

The next Sunday Rankin preached at another church, thirty miles away. The house was filled, nearly a thousand standing without, and straining eyes and ears "in unabated attention." All during the sermon they cried out in such a manner that Rankin was several times compelled to stop and entreat them to compose themselves. Among them were hundreds of negroes, who stood with convulsed features and the tears making shining gutters down their black faces.

These scenes were repeated over and over. All along the line of his route into North Carolina Rankin preached to stricken crowds. At an arbor love-feast in Brunswick the scene beggared description. It began between eight and nine in the morning and continued until noon. Near the center of the arbor sat the "band of believers," and crowded about them hundreds of those who had come seeking the same peace for their troubled souls. As one after another of the redeemed told how "the Lord had justified them freely," and others how the blood of Jesus, cleansing from all sin, had made them white as snow

—while all around them resounded the cries of those seeking a like blessing—"an awful feeling" crept over the vast assembly. The oldest preachers present had never witnessed such a scene. Thousands were bathed in tears and hundreds were converted. It was a great field-day in Virginia Methodism.

No less than fourteen counties in the State felt the blessed effects of this revival. It crossed the Roanoke into North Carolina, while in both States the fields were opening "wide and white to the reapers."

* * *

AMONG THE SONS OF BELIAL.

THE records of early Methodism in the South make frequent allusions to Pilmoor. On May 26, 1772, he started out on an extended itinerating tour through the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. He had many rough experiences, but doubtless the most startling was at the theater in Charleston, S. C. At that time this proud old city, where now the glittering spires of scores of churches reach heavenward, was apparently one of the most irreclaimably wicked cities on the American Continent. Indeed, on Asbury's first visit to it, three years subsequently, he was so shocked by "the desperate wickedness of the people" as to be in utter despair of ever making any impression upon them. "Ignorance of God, playing cards, dancing, swearing, and racing" abounded. Persecution, too, was rife. Asbury could not walk in the streets without

being insulted. It was even worse when Pilmoor came, the first Methodist preacher to enter the place—or the whole State, for that matter. No wonder that his heart grew sick, and that, as brave as he was, he felt like fleeing forever from the presence of these cursing, rioting, utterly abandoned “sons of Belial.” At first he could get no place in which to preach save the theater. In going thither he passed through lines of horribly profane creatures, many of them with sticks or stones in their hands, threatening death if he attempted to speak on religion of any kind. Seeing that they could not daunt him in this way, they prepared a different scheme. While he was preaching on the stage of the theater, he and the table before which he stood began to descend rapidly. Feeling the sensation of falling, Pilmoor quickly braced himself; and when he reached the cellar below he was not much hurt—just a little bruised. Thinking to give him a good fright, these sons of Belial had fixed his table directly over the trap-door, and suddenly let it down at an unusual rate of speed.

Pilmoor climbed back to the stage, and his table having previously been thrown there he now grasped it, and facing his audience invited them to an adjoining yard, concluding thus: “Come, my friends; we will, by the grace of God, defeat the devil this time, and not be driven by him from our work!” So saying, he withdrew to the yard, followed by his audience; and there, as calmly as if nothing had happened, he finished his discourse.

THE PIONEER BISHOP OF AMERICA.

WHEN, in 1771, an urgent call was made in the British Conference for more preachers for America, five young men offered themselves. Only two were accepted, Francis Asbury and Richard Wright. Of the latter we shall hear little; of the former much, for the story of his life is the story of American Pioneer Methodism.

Francis Asbury was the only child, after the death of a sister, of a gardener living in Handsworth, England—not far from that famous Wednesbury where so many of the stormy scenes of early Methodism took place. The date of his birth was August 20, 1745. The quaint house in which he was born stood back in a large garden—a long, rambling old building, with all its rooms on a precise line. The quaintest little dormer-windows were stuck all about the roof; the clumsy wooden doors were like the doors of a stable; and the tall, shaky-looking chimneys, with their pointed chimney-pots, seemed as if about to topple over. In this wide garden Francis played, and no doubt climbed to the tops of the trees and to the bowed roof of the old house. What if he was a grave and dignified bishop in after years?—he was nothing but a merry, light-hearted boy then, like many who will read this.

From the early age of seven he had been “piously inclined.” At fourteen he was so affected by the conversation and prayers of “a pious man” as to feel the spirit of love and grace “stirring within.” He went to hear the Methodists, and found them such

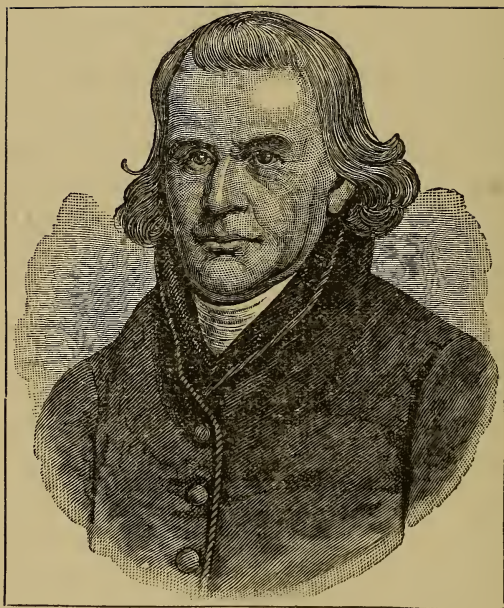
as his soul had longed for—the “ideal of Christian people.” Deep within his heart he said, “This people shall be my people.” How well he kept that vow! In every condition he stood by them—*his* people!

At eighteen Asbury became a preacher, a Methodist preacher, and was soon preaching as many as five times a week. At twenty-one he had taken regularly to itinerating, experiencing all the hardships and many of the persecutions of his predecessors. After “five years hard service” he was sent to the help of the struggling Church in America, there to write his name imperishably upon her records. On turning to this new and little known country, he took deep communion with his own heart. “I am going to live to God and bring others to do so.” How grandly that resolution was kept, let every act of his brave, beautiful, tireless life bear witness.

While on the voyage he had a taste of the hardships that awaited him in this untried land. His friends, through some oversight, neglected to provide him with an outfit of any kind, and thus he had to sleep on the hard boards of his berth, with but one blanket underneath and one for cover. Now let us see how he took this. Did he bemoan his hard lot, rail out against others for neglect of him, and wish himself back in old England? No, not *he*. “The more troubles I meet,” he affirmed, “the more convinced I am that I am doing the will of God.” Noble, unselfish, heroic man! Who fitter than he to lead to victory the scattered hosts of a struggling and persecuted Church?

On coming to America he found six hundred Methodists, ten preachers, much faith, considerable enthusiasm, but very little order and system. Being a natural leader, a born organizer, Asbury soon saw this would not do. He made the people see it too. Some of the preachers acted like bad boys at first—stubbornly—and would not see it. Like bad boys they did not want to be put under restraint and governed. But where they were too blind or too stubborn to see, Asbury made them *feel* it. He took them in hand—just as a clear, cool-headed man would take a lot of naughty, willful boys—gently, but firmly. Then how Methodism grew! how it spread over the country, to become as firmly implanted as the rock within the soil! Not even the great shock of war that followed could dislodge it.

When Asbury first came he found the preachers inclined to “settle” in the cities during the winter months, and extremely averse to “circulating” among the country churches. Thus the latter were left very much to themselves, suffering accordingly. This bold young leader instituted a new order of things. “No winter-quarters!” was his bold proclamation. And like a true commander he did not call upon his men to go where he did not himself lead the way. Thus he came to know hardships in their most trying form. The recital of some of his sufferings would bring tears from eyes all unused to weep. No Church has a more pathetic page upon her records. He spent days in the saddle, often without food of any kind; he climbed hills that were rugged mountains of dif-



FRANCIS ASBURY.

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ficulty, sometimes being compelled to dismount and toil over sharp stones that pierced through his thin shoes and brought the blood at almost every step. He swam swollen creeks and half-frozen rivers; he followed dangerous forest trails; he sunk to the knees in the mud of swamps, to pull himself up again and ride on in the raging storm, buffeted by the winds and stung by hail or sleet. On, on he went year after year, the same round, the one sanctified purpose ever in his heart—to win lost souls to Christ.

At twenty-seven years Asbury was made superintendent of all the churches in America, and twelve years later their first resident bishop. Now he entered upon a round of work that seems almost incredible. From this time to the day of his death, March 31, 1816, it is estimated that he traveled over no less than two hundred and seventy thousand miles, preached sixteen thousand five hundred sermons, presided at two hundred and twenty-four Annual Conferences, and ordained four thousand preachers. Such a record! And what a bishop!—what a man to have between the shafts of the great vehicle of Methodism! No wonder the rumbling of its wheels was heard from Nova Scotia to Georgia.

It was a constant source of mortification to some of Asbury's prouder members—for there were some proud Methodists then, just as there are now—that Asbury lived so little like a bishop. "Why, dear me!" they thought, "a bishop ought to live in a palace, and wear fine linen and rich robes, and fare sumptuously every day!" Well, that was the way

the bishops in proud, haughty old England lived; but over here in plain, republican America they did things differently—especially since this first Bishop of the New Continent had the courage, and the zeal, and the manliness, and the sense, and the utter disregard of self to establish a new line of things. Here was a bishop who literally had no home to call his own, whose richest vestments were a suit of rusty, seedy black, and whose sole earthly possessions consisted of one horse—and that sometimes borrowed—one coat, one waistcoat (the last coat and waistcoat used about fourteen months), four or five shirts, and four or five books; a bishop whose “episcopal throne was the saddle, his diocese a continent.”

At a camp-meeting in Western Virginia Bishop Asbury was introduced to an aristocratic old lady, from one of the New England States, who had long desired to meet the great Bishop of American Methodism. She fully expected to see a most pompous-looking personage in gown and ruffles, and with all the impressive paraphernalia of the episcopal office. Therefore, when the plain little man in his rusty black suit was introduced to her she could hardly believe her eyes. “Asbury?” she interrogated, “*Bishop Asbury?*” with great stress upon “Bishop.” “Yes, madam; Bishop Asbury, at your service,” he replied, bowing courteously, but with a look in his merry eyes that plainly showed that he knew how the land lay. Well, the great lady was shocked. The idea of a bishop traveling in such style as this! But she was too polite to show her real feelings further; so

she and the Bishop at once drifted into conversation. Before many minutes she found out that if there was less of the bishop, there was very much more of *the man*, inside those shabby clothes than she had imagined. Perhaps, after all, it was one of his eccentricities to travel in this fashion. Doubtless at home he lived in proper style. So, not to have *all* her pretty dream spoiled, she began questioning him about the episcopal palace. The Bishop smiled, and soon quietly informed her that there was no episcopal palace. "What!" exclaimed the lady; "you don't mean to tell me that you, *a bishop*, have *no home*!" "Yes, madam.

'No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in a wilderness;
A poor wayfaring man.'

She asked no more questions after that. She simply could not. If she could but have known even a few of the many real hardships in the life of this man, who felt far sharper needs than that of the lack of an episcopal residence. That was a small matter indeed, compared with other things.

One hot summer day he was on his way, with several preachers, to attend one of the Conferences. It had been a long and arduous journey over hills and mountains, with no sign of habitation since early morning. It was now well past dinner-time, and they were all faint with weariness and hunger. They knew that there was a tavern a few miles on, but without a shilling between them entertainment there was out of the question. Soon, in riding, on they came upon a cool and shady strip of woods beside the road.

Said the Bishop to the preachers: "Let us stop here and rest in the shade." Glad enough they were to obey, and dismounting from their horses bobbled them so that they could graze without straying. Far more fortunate were the brutes than their masters, who between them had not so much as one biscuit or a scrap of venison. Finally, turning to one of the preachers, Asbury said: "You will find some almond-nuts under the seat of my gig. Get them and spread them out on the trunk of that fallen tree yonder." The preacher obeyed with much alacrity. Even nuts were a blessing not to be despised. When the humble meal had been arranged according to the Bishop's orders, he invited the other preachers to draw near, and standing in their midst reverently lifted up his voice in a blessing to God. The grace finished, how quickly those almond-nuts disappeared! and with what cheerfulness and grateful content they arose from that feast (?), though feeling almost as empty as before.

Bishop Asbury's heart was ardently enlisted in the temperance cause, and he was not afraid to speak out his sentiments on any occasion, or to act up to them in public. One day he was dining with an aristocratic family, the head of which prided himself upon his cellar of fine wines and brandies. His wife shared this pride, and never lost an opportunity of pressing some of the liquors upon her guests. "Bishop," she said, turning toward Asbury, "shall I help you to a glass of brandy?" "No, madam," he replied; "I believe that he who striveth for the mas-

tery is temperate in all things." A hot flush dyed the lady's face. She was much disconcerted, but did not care to show it; so she rejoined: "Bishop, I believe that brandy is good in its place." "So do I, madam; and, if you have no objection, I will put it in its place." So saying he arose, and took the decanter in his hand, walked with it to the cupboard, and placing it there said firmly yet courteously: "There! madam, *that* is the place for it, and there let it stay." Instead of offending her, the words and the act brought earnest conviction to the lady's heart. The decanter remained where the Bishop had placed it—in the cupboard. She never again offered wine or brandy to her guests.

But what scene can compare with that in the mud of the Carolina swamps, when he, the Bishop of a great American Church, the idol of a strong people, humbly and devoutly knelt to pray with a poor black fisherman! The abject appearance of the slave, as he sat upon the bank fishing, attracted the attention of the Bishop, who was riding by. "Did you ever pray?" he asked suddenly, looking into the negro's startled face. "No, sir," was the answer. "Then, come down here and let us pray together." And kneeling with him there in the slime, the Bishop's knees well into it, his soul far away with his Father in heaven, he petitioned earnestly for the salvation of this humble black soul. Such a prayer could not fail of an answer. Twenty years afterward a negro, who had walked sixty miles just for the glimpse of one face, fell upon his knees at Bishop Asbury's feet,

in a crowded assembly, and grasping his hand bedewed it with grateful tears. It was "Black Punch," the former fisherman of the Santee swamps, now reclaimed, enlightened, made as a new being. Forty-eight years later still, an itinerant Methodist preacher, traveling in the wilderness of South Carolina, heard of a "flock" of two or three hundred on a plantation near by, and like a good shepherd went in search of them. "Have you a preacher?" he asked. "O yes, massa, 'de ole Bishop;' him lib hyar." "Is he a good preacher?" "O yes, massa; him word so hot it 'mos' burn out yer heart." Anxious to see a personage of such power as this, the preacher went to the cabin, where the "ole Bishop," venerable and fast nearing the end, was laid up with the palsy. It was Punch, "Black Punch," Asbury's convert of the swamps, whose title had been borrowed from the man who converted him. Three hundred in the society, and the overseer himself and many other whites converted, and all through the instrumentality of "Black Punch"—what a record! O Asbury, glorious and inimitable! heroic knight of a heroic faith! something more than a passing impulse caused you to kneel that day in the Santee swamps.

When the trials, the sufferings, and the patient endurance of nearly half a century had left their imprint upon the lined face and the bending figure, Bishop Asbury was carried one Sunday into a church in Richmond, Virginia. Here, sitting upon a table in the pulpit, with a flash of the old-time fire in his eyes, and an expression of heavenly love and peace

upon his countenance, he preached his last sermon. Six days later, at Spottsylvania, the wheels of a life that had run on untiringly to the end made their last round, and the soul of Francis Asbury, pioneer Bishop of the Methodist Church in America, and the first Protestant Bishop of the Continent, had joined the hosts above, where "labor finds them not, nor care."

* * *

THE BUNYAN OF AMERICAN METHODISM.

PHILIP GATCH, the second native itinerant, followed Captain Webb and Boardman into New Jersey. Gatch was a young man who only a short while before had had a glorious awakening from sin. He entered New Jersey with a stout heart, a determined will, and a soul deeply convinced of three things: "Its own weakness, the help that God alone could afford, and the necessity of saving the souls of the people."

During Gatch's early labors in New Jersey occurred the conversion of Benjamin Abbott, one of the most remarkable characters in the annals of Methodism. The story of this man's life reads like the chapters of a romance, or the stirring pages of some wonderful and well-nigh incredible record. Only a touch here and there can be given. His startling experiences gained for him the title, "The Bunyan of American Methodism." Like Bunyan, in early life he had been "notoriously wicked." He had been an apprentice in Philadelphia, and was now a farmer in New Jersey. He had no fear of God, and cer-

tainly none of man. He openly lived in the midst of the grossest vices, and was the roughest and most daring of men. But he had a good wife, a praying wife, and God had not quite abandoned him. Touched by his wife's emotion, he time and again promised reform, but these promises invariably melted away as the dew when the sun touches it. Up to his fortieth year he had never heard of conversion, or of "pardon actually felt and known." As upright as his wife was, she could not help him in this, for she was a Presbyterian—she lived by her creed. But under all this apparently hopeless crust the volcanic fire began to stir into flame. His soul grew restless. At night he had alarming dreams. In this condition he went to hear Philip Gatch. The scales fell from his eyes; he saw himself as he was, the vilest of sinners. He wondered that "he was out of hell." He went again to the Methodist meeting, and under the power of the word "shook in every joint," crying aloud for mercy.

"Abbott is mad!" said those who watched him; but he was not mad. He fled to the woods, and there, deep in those silent recesses, with no eye but God's upon him, the frenzy of suicide seized him. But in his torture, when he had raised his hand to end all, came the thought as a flash: "There is *nothing* compared to hell!" His hand dropped nerveless; his soul stood fast in terror. Cold perspiration broke from him as he realized what he had been about to do. He sprung up and fled homeward, feeling that Satan and all his fiends were "in hot pursuit."

The night that followed was one of unbearable horrors. His mind seemed going from him. He cried out in agony and beat his forehead with his hands. In vain. There was no relief. The next day, as he worked in the fields, "his troubled heart beat so loud he could hear the strokes." He threw down his scythe and fell upon his face weeping. Torn with the throes of distress, even his strong body was not equal to the strain. "But for *some* moderation of the pain and anxiety," he said afterward, "I must have died ere the going down of the sun." He fell upon his knees, and for the first time in all his life prayed to God. Some relief came, but not yet was his soul in peace, for still was the treasure itself un-found. At the coming on of the night he was again with the Methodists, and trembling "like Belshazzar at the writing of the hand on the wall." "Save, Lord, or I perish!" he cried in his extremity, and tried to reach the altar and the preacher, but could not for the crowd. But he went home, and, to his wife's great joy, had family prayer.

The next day, in company with his wife, he went ten miles to where the Methodists were holding their meeting, and begged of the preacher "baptism for his soul's relief." Not yet did he see clearly. He knew nothing of "justification by faith." His request seemed odd to the preacher. "Are you a Quaker?" he asked of Abbott. "No," was the reply; "I am nothing but a poor, wretched, condemned sinner!" And overcome with a sense of his woes, he burst into tears. "Then," said the preacher, com-

forting him, "you are the very man Christ died for, or he would not have awakened you. Be of good cheer, have faith, and thou shalt be saved."

With the preacher's words ringing in his ears, Abbott went home. That night, waking in terror from his dreams, he saw, as in a vision, the Saviour standing with outstretched arms and saying, "I died for *you!*" The supreme moment had come—the test of his faith. He saw, he *believed!* Happy as an angel, he sprung from bed and ran to tell his household of the Saviour he had found. Midnight as it was, they were called up for prayer, and he stood in their midst sobbing out his joy, with glowing eyes and radiant face.

The next day the report that Abbott had gone "raving mad" spread through the neighborhood like wild-fire. A clergyman, a friend of the family, tried to free him from what he termed simply "the delusion of the devil." "He *may* be right," said the voice of doubt in Abbott's heart. But the better spirit urged, "Take this to God in prayer." He did, felt the precious blood re-applied, and rose up shouting, "Not all the devils in hell shall make me *doubt!*"

Abbott being a man of "dreams and visions," like Bunyan, a sore trial awaited him through a dream that came to him not long after his conversion. He dreamed that the preacher who first aroused him to a need of salvation through Christ alone had fallen away from his gracious heritage, and was a disgraced and ruined man. The dream came true, for this man—Abraham Whitworth—did shamefully fall through the temptings of the flesh.

This sad occurrence had a strange effect upon Abbott. It seemed to him that he too must fall through the mere association. "What will become of me now that he is fallen?" he asked himself over and over again. But Christ, the Captain, still held command. Amidst all the tumult and doubt and darkness his voice rung in stern warning: "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh!" With these words came light and hope and strength. It was *not* in accord with the divine decree that the salvation of one man should depend upon the slipping away of another. He heard Philip Gatch again about this time, and was happily strengthened in his faith in the Methodist ministry. Abbott himself became the first native itinerant minister in New Jersey. His cup seemed running over when not long after this his wife and three children were converted by Gatch.

Abbott now entered upon his wonderful work. Some of the scenes that attended his preaching would challenge credence but for the indelible stamp of truth upon them. His texts came to him in his sleep, and he would often wake up preaching from them. From exhorting he went to preaching. His first regular sermon was over the coffin of a neighbor. Many sinners fell before his powerful words. He knew the corrupt ways of men. He had sounded every depth himself, and knew how to reach them as did perhaps no other preacher of that day. He is described as "half lamb, half lion." One moment his fierce threatenings would make sinners tremble as in a moral ague, then in softened tones he

would cause tears to flow from the eyes of the most hardened transgressors.

Once when speaking with unwonted energy against the various abominations of the day, he suddenly cried out, "For aught I know there may be a murderer in this congregation!" Immediately a stout man, very pale-faced and trembling so he could hardly stand, attempted to go out. When he reached the door, as if unable to contain himself any longer, he screamed out several times, stretching his arms before him as if to screen himself from some terrible thing, and, running back through the congregation until he got to the far side of the room, there fell against the wall, crying out bitterly: "Yes, I *am* a murderer! I killed a man fifteen years ago!" And thus he lay, calling out in the anguish of his soul and imploring preacher and people to have mercy and pray for the pardon of his sins. The people were alarmed, the preacher astonished; but the latter, assuring the man that he would pray for him at the close of his sermon, recovered himself and went on with his discourse.

At Deerfield, in New Jersey, Abbott was threatened with a coat of tar and feathers should he attempt to preach. But he resolved to proclaim the gospel message, "if he had to *die* for it!" He walked between two lines of ominous faces to the pulpit, where he gave out his hymn; but no one sung, and he sung it alone from beginning to end. Though he was outwardly calm, yet "every joint in his body trembled," he tells us. But the power of God was even then at

work, and in the prayer that followed it came down so mightily that the very rafters shook with the outpouring of long-pent emotions. Some fell upon the floor, "others screamed aloud." Even the leader of the mob, who had the tar and feathers at hand, threw his bucket through the window, and knelt at the altar for prayer. "Not since Williams went away," said one and all, "have we heard such preaching."

Abbott moved on to Salem, where a Presbyterian elder, struck by something in the man that was irresistible, invited him to preach in his house. Abbott promised he would do so on that day two weeks at three o'clock. Going to keep his appointment at the Presbyterian elder's home, he found a large crowd assembled. Before the sermon was finished both the elder and his wife were awakened. Many people cried out and fell to the floor, while some had to be carried out as men that are slain in battle. "Do you know what you have done?" Abbott asked of the elder at the close of the meeting. "What have I done?" he questioned. "You have opened your house to the Methodists, and, if a work of religion break out, your people will turn you out of the synagogue." Then up spoke the newly converted minister with brave determination: "I will die for the truth!" Another clergyman admitted of this Methodist sermon that it was "*the truth*, though spoken in a rather rough manner."

The next day Abbott met a young Baptist lady who was very ill, and whose soul had been struggling for many years in a bondage from which it could not

escape. He talked and prayed with her, and pointed her to the way—not by the path that led down into the water, but simply by faith through the blood of Christ Jesus.

Abbott and the other Methodist itinerants along the Atlantic coast were constantly meeting with the converts of Whitefield. Most of them had gone into the Presbyterian churches, some into the Baptist, but many came over to Methodism. Everywhere they could see evidences of the rich and patient sowing of the great evangelist.

Soon after he began to preach, Abbott made a Sunday expedition to a place that fully deserved its name, "Hell Neck." There was much opposition and some violence, but he routed Satan's strongest allies in the first fray. One sinner said: "I have heard Abbott swear, and I have seen him fight. Now I will go and hear him preach." He went, and fell as a slain man, rising again in the strength of life renewed. He opened his home to Abbott as a preaching-place, and soon the banner of Methodism was floating over redeemed "Hell Neck."

At Mannington he fell into the hands of wicked and violent men. He was mobbed, slashed at with swords, pelted with stones, and had bayonets presented at his breast. Twice one man made a persistent effort to run him through, the bayonet each time passing close beside his ear.

From town to town he went as a good soldier. The great Captain of the hosts had given his marching orders, and the battle-cry was, "Ever onward!" In

all parts of New Jersey he kindled a gospel flame that never went out. Nor did his labors cease within the borders of that little State: he spread the light in Pennsylvania and Delaware. He was a man of dreams, it is true—like Bunyan, a “prince of dreamers”—but he was also a man of decided action. He is buried at Salem, New Jersey, among the people of his love.

* * *

THE DEEDS OF A NOBLE LIFE.

IN a work of the scope and character of this many deserving names and notable scenes, that added some of the most stirring chapters to early Methodism, must necessarily be left out. We can only here and there touch upon men and incidents more prominently connected with the *beginning* of Methodism in different places, especially with its founding in certain sections of the country. Such a place is distinctively merited by Jesse Lee, for he was unquestionably the founder of Methodism in New England. What a noble life was his! and how the student lingers entranced over the record of deeds that even knights of the old romances never performed! How *could* they, when they knew naught of that highest attribute of Christian knighthood—the desire to win souls to Christ?

Jesse Lee was born in 1758, the son of a Virginia farmer in moderate circumstances. The neighborhood in which he lived was like many of the Virginia neighborhoods of that day—the people knew God

only by name. His parents were members of the Church; yet, while they were strictly moral, they were not religious. But a change was to come. When he was fifteen years old Jesse was one day much startled by hearing his father remark that men might not only have their sins forgiven of God, but they might also feel within themselves the consciousness of their sins forgiven. Jesse was interested as well as startled. He asked his father where he had learned that. He was told that he had heard it spoken about a year before at a meeting conducted by a good Episcopal minister by the name of Jarratt, whose departure from the old dead forms and customs of his Church had for some time been startling the people of this section of Virginia. The words rung in Jesse's ears. Soon they were succeeded by a haunting question, "Are my sins forgiven?" He knew they were not, and, shaken with a sense of guilt and fear, he fled to the woods, where he wandered for hours in a torture of spirit almost unendurable. "Lost! lost! unless God forgives *my* sins," sounded in his ears. Day after day found him in the woods in the same tortured state of mind. He had no friend to whom he could go. He dared not speak to his father. Four terrible weeks this struggle continued, and then one morning, just as he felt himself sinking down, down, almost to the depths of hell, a voice spoke to him: "If thou wilt *believe*, thou shalt be saved!" He saw the way now as though a flash of light had revealed it to him: he must have *faith*—faith, the rudder without which no sailor could

steer. With a cry of utter submission to God's will, he fell forward upon his face, and the blessing came. "My whole frame," he says, "was in a tremor from head to foot, and my soul enjoyed sweet peace."

He joined the Methodists under the preaching of the Rev. Robert Williams, the pioneer of Virginia Methodism. At twenty years of age he became a class-leader, and a year later he entered the ministry. And now began a career to which no pen, however, gifted, can do justice. But it is of Jesse Lee in New England that we wish particularly to speak.

He preached for six years in Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey. During all this time he had heard much of New England and of the coldness of the people there. Accordingly, in June 1789, he found himself at Norwalk, Connecticut, an utter stranger. Previous to this time a friend, knowing Lee's desire to enter New England, had written to a gentleman there by the name of Rogers, asking him to allow the preacher to hold a meeting in his house. On entering the village Lee at once sought Mr. Rogers's residence. A lady met him at the door, and, on learning who he was, said: "My husband is not at home, but he is not willing you should preach in our house." Lee's heart sunk, but he was too brave a man to show it. "Well, ma'am," he said after a few moments, "I will hold a meeting in the road." Then came a sudden thought, and he asked: "But may I not speak in that old house yonder?" As he spoke he pointed to an empty house on the premises; but she would not agree to his proposition.

Unabashed by the coldness of his reception, Lee next approached an elderly lady, who lived near by, asking her permission to preach in her orchard. She flew into a passion at once, replying curtly: "No, sir, you *cannot!* The people would tread down my grass."

But he was not vanquished yet. He determined that the people of cold New England should hear the gospel of Christ Jesus, even through worse difficulties than these. So he wrote notices and posted them in the village, stating that at a certain hour he would preach in the streets. When the time came he stood with uncovered head, reverently singing a hymn. He had a strong, sweet voice, and soon the charm of his singing drew a large crowd around him. The earnest prayer that followed thrilled many hearts with a strange feeling. But the sermon!—*that* burned its way to every soul, causing "all to wonder and some to weep." At its close they crowded about him in much curiosity, and though their interest led them to promise that that day two weeks he should have the town-hall for his preaching-place, still no one invited him home. Where he slept that night is not known, but doubtless upon the ground—that and many nights succeeding it. In all that chilling region he had not one friend to cheer his fainting heart, not one fireside to which he could go and sit in the glow of its cheerful warmth, feeling its welcome. Instead he was laughed at, mocked, and often cruelly treated. Still, he rode from town to town, from neighborhood to neighborhood, resolutely waving the banner of salvation.

At Stratfield he formed his first class—that of three earnest women, in whose hearts the holy flame had been kindled never to go out. Nine months he spent in these weary and almost cheerless labors, then Asbury sent three of the preachers to help him. Three circuits were formed; and, leaving these brethren “to reap fruit from the precious seed he had sown,” Lee rode away farther into cold New England.

Near the center of Boston Common, until a few years ago, stood a wide-spreading and venerable elm, the observed of all others. Its decaying limbs were held together by clamps and rivets of iron, while a stout railing of the same material prevented the contact of rude and curious hands. Why was the elm thus protected? Why these strong supporting bands of iron? Simply that this venerable elm, with its time-marked trunk and its fast crumbling limbs, was very dear to the Methodists of this eastern metropolis, since under its shade on a July afternoon, ninety-nine years ago, Jesse Lee had delivered the first distinctively Methodist sermon ever preached in Boston.

Even in that July weather, the sun seemed to shine with an almost serene benignancy from the cloudless blue of the sky, as a man dressed with the rigid simplicity of a Quaker approached the old elm, then a young and vigorous tree, and took his stand upon a table set beneath its branches. All about him children played upon the grass, while nurses with their charges came and went. Here and there were groups of people either walking about or sitting upon the

rustic benches beneath the trees. The solitary stranger who took his stand so quietly upon the table under the elm could not have been a Quaker, for no sooner had he stepped upon it than he removed his hat and placed it upon one of the limbs above him. Drawn by curiosity as to what he could be going to do, four people came near. As his melodious voice broke into a song, his audience increased. Nothing quite so pleasant had been heard upon that common for many a day. The song finished, he knelt upon the table, and stretching forth his hands in petition to an unseen but present God, he prayed with a depth and pathos that thrilled more than one callous heart. So unusual was this proceeding, so mysterious and interesting the appearance of the stranger, that before he had risen from his knees the promenaders came pouring in from every direction. Soon his congregation had become a multitude. They scarcely knew *why* they were drawn thither. As they came within sound of his voice new and strange feelings stirred them. It was soon evident that he was preaching; but what a strange way to preach—without notes, without any thing save a little pocket Bible from which he took his text! But what was he saying? Surely something about faith and works. “Both are wrong!” cried the stranger from his table. “Faith is one oar, works is another. He who rows with one does not advance, but only whirls about; he who rows with the other only whirls in the opposite direction; he who works both in harmony moves forward and *heavenward!*”

As he went on the throng continued to increase, till soon he was surrounded by fully three thousand eager, curious people. Some seemed a little restless, others inquisitive. A few of the more light-minded went so far as to giggle out, but upon the faces of many was that serious, reflective expression born of a soul in deep communion with itself. He went on with his sermon. Bolder and more fervent it grew. Now he would gratify the more refined taste of his audience by the presentation of beautiful imagery, then melt them to tears by the deep pathos of words and look, but ever holding up to them the picture of a gentle, loving, forgiving Saviour. It was a sermon to make the Calvinistic creed of New England rattle as the bones of a wind-swept skeleton. Notwithstanding the marked impression made by this sermon, no hand grasped his at its close, no eye spoke a welcome, no lip invited him to the shelter of a hospitable home. But it was summer weather, and he was used to sleeping upon the ground. Not for such drawbacks as these was he to be frightened from the field. Brave, true-hearted Jesse Lee! when Methodism sent you forth to the possession of sin's waste places, she sent as dauntless a knight as ever bore lance in a righteous cause.

The week following that Sunday upon Boston Common Lee spent in preaching in the towns between Boston and Newburyport. But the next Sunday found him again beneath the boughs of the spreading elm, and now his congregation had swelled to fully five thousand. The eloquence of the sermon

leaped as a flame of fire from heart to heart, and many a soul felt itself enkindled under his burning words, yet no friendly hand was offered him at its close, no voice welcomed him to a genial home, nor was there even *one* convert to the Methodist faith. Such treatment was enough to send him back to where the fire of Methodism could put new warmth into his chilled heart. But not so. He was repulsed, not conquered. He had no need to go elsewhere for the enkindling of faith, since deep within his own heart the flame burned inextinguishably. He kept his face to the foe, and came off victor.

At the neighboring town of Lynn he won his first friends and his first converts. He made that place his head-quarters. He now began to see the reward of his labors, for, though late in springing up, the seed sown amidst such patient toil had only taken deeper root. Three years after his first visit to Boston he organized there, in 1793, its first Methodist society. Three years more, and a church was built. The Methodist banner had been unfurled not only in Boston, but in many other parts of New England. To-day there is hardly a hamlet within its bounds where the grand old standard does not wave.

Jesse Lee lived to be fifty-eight years old. Giant as he was in body and mind, he saw his energies slowly but surely drained from him through the ravages of malarial fever, and realized that the end was near. He died September 12, 1816. His last words were a shout of triumph: "Halleluiah! halleluiah! Jesus reigns!" There have been many greater and wiser

than he, but none better or more faithful. The story of his life-deeds is written imperishably upon the record of American pioneer Methodism. "By his work we know the master."



A TRUE KNIGHT-ERRANT OF METHODISM.

IN a beautiful home overlooking the waters of Chesapeake Bay, in Maryland, and not far from the mouth of the Susquehanna River, was born, in 1752, one by whom the standard of Methodism was destined to be carried into many sections of the New World, from North Carolina to Nova Scotia. This was Freeborn Garrettson, whose first name well expresses his boyish character, marked as it was by so decided "a tone of freedom and independence." Before he had reached his tenth year he had been graciously inclined to religion; but on the death of his idolized mother and sister he became bitter against the Being whom he thought had cruelly bereaved him. By the time he was sixteen years of age he had given himself almost solely to idle pleasures. At this stage of his life he met with the Methodist itinerants. Their ringing words aroused a Voice long slumbering in his heart. A narrow escape from drowning followed close upon this awakening, and increased the agitation within his heart. "What would have become of my soul if I had been drowned?" That question haunted him night and day. He read religious books, he wept over his sins, but still no relief came. One beautiful afternoon early in

May he was riding on horseback along a rocky road. As he was descending a steep hill at a rapid gait, his horse stumbled and threw him violently to the ground. When he came to his senses the startling thought presented itself: "Had I died, I should have dropped into hell!" He fell upon his knees and prayed passionately to God for help. Feeling strangely calmed, he arose and said firmly: "By the grace of God, I *will* be a follower of Christ!" Still he was not converted. It was one thing to *say* he would find the consciousness of sins forgiven, and another to *feel* it. But he was well on the way.

While in this condition Garrettson heard the good Asbury and others preach; but a deep-rooted and bitter prejudice against these Methodists kept him for many months away from the blessing that God was waiting to give him. One day, however, the Voice spoke to him as it had never done before. In a twinkling his pride, his prejudice, his doubts all fell from him as a great burden that had been rolled away; and, dropping upon his knees, he then and there gave himself up in unconditional surrender to God. He was so happy that he could not contain himself. He went home shouting. His servants looked at him in alarm. His face was as the face of one upon which a great light shone. He gathered the Bible and the hymn-book, and called his household, his servants, in to prayer. A few days later there occurred a most remarkable scene, as, standing with the open Bible before him and the tears raining over his face, he freed his slaves.

His prejudice against the Methodists being now completely broken down, he did not hesitate to attach himself to them. Still he had at that time no idea of becoming a preacher. Like so many of the early Methodists, his first thought was to do all the good he could; so he earnestly began exhorting his neighbors. He did this even before he had formally united himself with the Church.

At this time the war of the Colonies was at its height, and Garrettsen was called upon, as a good patriot, to take up arms in defense of his country. This he refused to do, not because he was a coward, but because he looked upon the shedding of human blood under any pretext as contrary to the law of humanity and of God. Who shall say that he was not right? He was pronounced a crazy fanatic, a religious enthusiast, and many more hard names were applied to him. But for none of these things did he care. He had bravely and unconditionally enlisted in the army of another Commander, and so long as life was spared he intended to remain a faithful soldier under the banners of the Prince of Peace.

In 1779 he regularly joined the Methodist itinerancy. He could not have entered the ranks at a more perilous time. The whole country was in a state of agitation. All along the Atlantic shore, to hundreds of miles inward, resounded the tramp of armies. Battle had succeeded battle. The noblest blood of two continents had met and mingled. The worst passions were aroused. Neighbors, friends, brothers, suspected each other, either of loyalty or disloyalty as the

case might be. The Methodist preachers were "everywhere spoken against," and everywhere persecuted. They were accused of being "King George men," and hated accordingly. Even those born on American soil did not escape. It was enough to know that they were members of the hated sect.

Young Garrettson bore his share of this persecution with a meekness and a heroism that could only have been born of the true Christian spirit. He was fined and thrown into prison, he was slandered, insulted, and beaten with stripes. More than once he was pulled from his horse, trampled upon, and left for dead; but his heroic soul was never in fear. Wherever he went, preaching an ever-present Saviour to lost souls, the most wonderful success crowned his efforts, for God was with this bold knight-errant whose two-edged sword cut right and left at the sins of men. He preached in his native Maryland, the sharp point of his good blade cutting into hundreds of hearts that had openly opposed and even abused him. He went into Virginia, sometimes preaching as many as four times a day. He penetrated southward into North Carolina, and here the most extraordinary scenes attended his preaching. Once he was nearly beaten to death by a man who gave no other reason for his savage attack than that Garrettson was a Methodist preacher, and needed to have the abominable doctrine thrashed out of him! On another occasion the man who entertained him was shot, while the preacher himself narrowly escaped.

In 1784 he met Dr. Coke, who said of him: "He

seems to be all meekness and love, and yet all activity." This high regard ripened into an intense desire on the part of Dr. Coke to send Garrettson into the wilds of Nova Scotia. After a stormy passage, Garrettson—in company with his assistant, Cromwell—arrived in the bleak country, at Halifax, in the early part of the year 1785. Here numberless persecutions awaited them. On one of the first evenings of Garrettson's preaching large stones were thrown at him through the windows, one of them, about a pound in weight, narrowly missing his head. He paid no more attention to it than if it had been a harmless pea-nut. "This is but trifling," commented he, "so I can but win souls to Christ!" With God's help, he became the founder of Methodism in Halifax.

He went into various parts of this province and others adjacent. Obstacles well-nigh insurmountable stood in the way, but he preached on, carrying the life and light of Methodism into what was doubtless at that day the dreariest and most desolate portion of the American Continent. He kept constantly on his travels—nothing deterred him. Where there were roads of any kind, he and his faithful horse found them. In places where there were no roads, but simply Indian foot-paths, he left his horse behind him, and, strapping his wallet upon his back, proceeded on foot. On these journeys he often had to wade through swamps half a leg deep in mud and water. Sometimes he would be so chilled as to be incapable of motion for several minutes. Frequent-

ly his clothes were frozen stiff, and locomotion was almost impossible. But on such occasions he stopped under the shelter of a hill, kindled a fire, dried his clothing, and went on again. His sufferings from hunger also were intense. For days at a time he lived on the bread and pork he carried in his wallet. He oftener made his bed upon the cold, bleak ground than in some civilized habitation. There, upon a couch of leaves drifted together in a hollow, or upon a pile of hemlock-boughs in the shelter of the rocks, he passed many a night in deep thankfulness to God that it was as well with him as it was.

One terrible winter night he found himself traveling through a thinly-settled district. A heavy snow had fallen, followed by a sleet. He and his exhausted horse repeatedly tried to find a track of some kind—they had gone down into the snow, seemingly without the power to rise again; but at length, struggling onward, they came to the door of a lonely cabin in the woods. Garrettson had just strength enough left to dismount, turn his horse under a shelter near, and stagger into the cabin. Here, without taking note of his surroundings, save to make out a bed in one corner, he approached it and fell insensible upon it. The only inmates of the cabin at the time were some children playing about a fire on the hearth. Though small, they had the presence of mind to throw plenty of covering over him, and thus probably saved his life. It was nine hours before he returned to consciousness.

In his travels he had frequently to cross the St.

John's. As the student of geography doubtless knows, the tide of this river is very treacherous, sometimes receding and leaving its bed nearly empty, and again rushing back with great velocity, sweeping all before it. Sometimes its returning waves catch in their tempestuous grasp the vessels that have been lying high and dry on land and elevate them many feet higher. When the tide recedes the river is fordable, but in winter this is exceedingly dangerous, owing to the great masses of ice that block the way.

On one occasion Garrettson's guide, instead of leading him *up* the river where the fording was safer, went *down* to one of the most treacherous crossings. Un-suspicious of danger, Garrettson followed the guide into the midst of the river. They had gone about two-thirds of the distance across when both were horrified to see the rushing, roaring tide sweeping down upon them. The guide shrieked out, "Put spurs to your horse, and make for the nearest land!" at the same time following his own words by action. Garrettson at once obeyed. He had a swift, powerful horse, one that had before borne him out of danger. The shores were near, though steep and rugged. Rider and steed bent every energy. They reached the land by a mere hand's-breadth, for just as the good steed planted his feet upon the firm ground the waves swept over his back, nearly bearing away his master. The record says that if the latter had been "half the length of his horse's body behind, he would have been swept off into the tide like a feather."

While in Nova Scotia Garrettson as frequently came upon those who were made stony through some rigid creed as upon those hardened in the ways of sin. With the former he often had the more stubborn fight. Once a Calvinist said to him: "Your doctrine is well enough in some things, but there is one part of it I do not like." "What part is that?" asked Garrettson. "You say, sir, that a saint may fall." Instead of replying Garrettson put a direct question: "Do you know that you were ever converted?" To this the man made answer that he was "positive that he had been regenerated," but at the same time confessed that he was then living in what he termed a "winter state." Garrettson then pressed him to the point where he acknowledged that by this "winter state" he meant he was "living in known sin." Then up spoke the bold knight-errant of Methodism: "You do not believe in falling from grace because you are already fallen. You call this 'a winter state!' I call it being in the arms of the wicked one. You may talk as you will of your past experience, but I would not give a straw for your chance of heaven if you die in this state. You are trying to reconcile Christ and Belial." Greatly confused, the Calvinist tried to parry this sharp thrust by replying: "Well, I know I shall be raised up at the last day." "O yes, you will," returned the bold preacher again; "but unless you repent it will be to be cast into the lake of fire!" The disconcerted man turned upon his heels, and Garrettson never saw him again.

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So glorious a work did Garrettson do for Methodism in Nova Scotia that Wesley wished to make him superintendent of the societies there. But the heart of the stanch knight longed to be back with his people in the States. Returning, his zeal seemed to increase tenfold, if possible. From that time, until the infirmities of age set an absolute seal upon his labors, he toiled over a stretch of country that reached from Maryland on the south to Maine on the north. He was not a perfect man. Who is? His position on the slavery question, then very unpopular in the Colonies, often led him into heated discussions. He would frequently lose his temper, seeming to have little patience with those in whose minds the opposite conviction had, through birth and education, become as firmly planted as his own. A little more patience and Christian forbearance—how much better they would have been! No one can change all the training of a life-time in an hour; and though Freeborn Garrettson felt honestly within his soul the unalterable conviction that God, justice, humanity, all were on his side, still the citadel of the opposition could not be stormed nor broken down in a moment. He made the mistake of haste and of a dictatorial temper, as the half of a nation made it subsequently and precipitated the most causeless of modern wars. But aside from this, the work he did for Christ and for Methodism must forever stand out luminously upon her annals. At that last day how many hundreds of souls guided into the paths of righteousness will arise to call him blessed! • His last

words were, "Glory! glory!" and with a light upon his face, not of earth, he went home to live with Christ forever.

* * *

STARTLING SCENE IN SALEM, NEW JERSEY.

IN Salem, New Jersey, the persecution of the Methodists was waged with unusual violence. Especially was this the case during the War of the Revolution. They could not hold a meeting except at the peril of their lives. At last the magistrates had to interfere and give them protection.

Violence ceased after awhile, but some of the lower-minded kept up a system of petty persecution that was extremely annoying. The members of a certain profane club not only tormented the Methodists in public, but gave private entertainments in which to burlesque their peculiar mode of worship. On an occasion of this sort, just after one young man had exhausted his breath in imitation of "a Methodist screamer," as he designated the preacher, and another had declaimed "a regular yelping prayer," a young lady arose to take off "the good sister in a Methodist class." "Glory to God!" she began, "I have found peace; I am sanctified; I am now ready to die!" But before she could utter another word a terrible expression came over her face, and with a cry more startling and appalling than Methodist meeting ever echoed, she fell back *dead!*

Overcome with horror, the club broke up, many fleeing in terror from the spot. It never met again. This fearful evidence of the vengeance of an out-

raged God had its effect upon all, causing more than one of them finally to unite with the despised Methodists.

* * *

THE CHAIR PULPIT.

ONE of the itinerant heroes of early Methodism in America was Philip Cox. He carried the banner of the cause with irresistible power from Long Island to Western Virginia. He was converted to Methodism in 1774, and entered upon his itinerant labors three years later. When he began to preach he was even poorer than his Divine Master, for he scarcely had one suit of whole clothing to cover his shivering form. Seeing his condition, some noble women spun the thread and wove it into garments for him. He it was who first presented young Enoch George to Bishop Asbury with the characteristic remark that has become famous. He was a small man, weighing only about one hundred pounds; but the force that dwelt within this small compass was incalculable. His energy often had the effect to stir a whole region into a revival of religion.

While Cox was laboring on the Sussex Circuit in Virginia he fell and broke one of his legs. During the time necessary for the fracture to heal he was urged to take a season of rest. He at length reluctantly consented, yet it was not to be. Only a few days after the leg had been set, and while it was still swathed in bandages, he was called to attend the funeral of a child. He found about one hundred persons gathered. He preached to them sitting in a

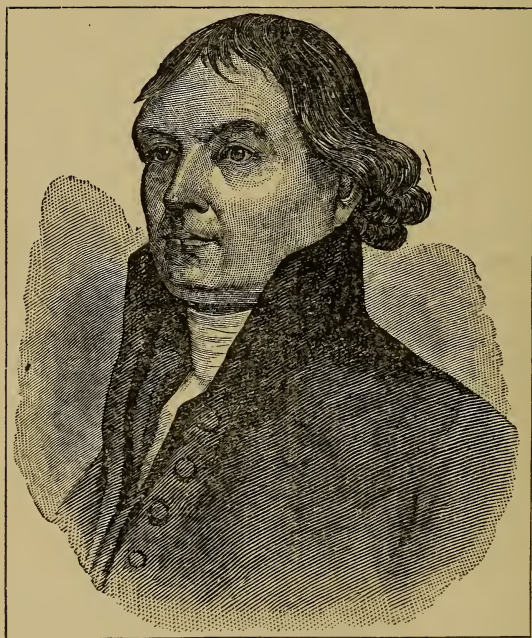
chair placed upon a table. The sermon swept its way to all hearts. He preached from the text: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." There was not a dry eye in the congregation. Many wept piteously. Half his congregation were already professors of religion, while so powerful was the effect of the sermon that at its conclusion the entire remaining half professed conversion—one of the most remarkable instances on record in any Church. From this sermon a great revival emanated.

Cox continued to preach, day after day, still sitting in his chair pulpit upon the table. Sometimes he held forth in a building, a private house, a barn, or a chapel, but oftener in the open air. All this while he suffered agony from his unhealed limb, but with a fortitude born of his own courage and the strength of God he continued to bring many precious souls to Christ.

* * *

TWO SCENES IN THE LIFE OF A BISHOP.

ON a bright Sunday morning, about one hundred years ago, the Methodists of a certain circuit in Virginia were assembled in their church-building awaiting the arrival of the new preacher assigned them at the last Conference. As they were a circuit of some importance, having paid in full all assessments and signified their willingness to support a preacher to the extent that the times and the church-work required, they naturally expected a man of some ability as well as of prepossessing appearance. Their



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disappointment and chagrin can therefore be better imagined than described when there appeared at the church-door an awkward, uncouth-looking man, who at once proceeded to the pulpit and knelt there for a few moments in prayer. He was tall and slender, but he carried himself with a slouching, careless gait very irritating to the nerves of the critical beholder. Added to this, he was young, raw-looking, and shabbily dressed. As he rose to open the services, he seemed more awkward and ill-at-ease than ever. He trembled, he shifted from one foot to the other, he knocked the hymn-book off in his nervous excitement, and came near upsetting the pitcher of water. He picked up the hymn-book, after nearly falling over in the pulpit, and apparently having gained a little composure, in the interval that his face had been hidden from the congregation, he opened the Bible and announced his text. Even now he could not look his congregation in the eye, but kept his gaze riveted upon the open page of the Bible all through the sermon. As to the discourse itself, it was so halting and disconnected that very little idea as to its import could be gathered. At the conclusion of the services every member of the congregation filed out with no thought for the preacher save one of irritation and disgust. Even his host, whose name was Epps, forgot him for the time and left the house without noticing him; but finally, a remembrance of his shabby young guest coming to him, and being naturally a hospitable man, he returned to the church. There, greatly to his surprise, he found

the almost heart-broken young preacher sitting on the steps of the pulpit, his face covered by his hands, through the fingers of which the hot, despairing tears were dropping. "Come home with me, young man," said Mr. Epps, approaching him. "I am not fit to go home with anybody," returned the preacher in a choking voice. "Well, but you must have something to eat," replied the other somewhat curtly, yet in as sympathetic a voice as he could at the moment command. Hastily drying his tears, the young preacher arose to follow his host. As they went toward Epps's home the young man, although given but little encouragement, could not help but unburden himself. He had made a great mistake, he said, in having entered the ministry. He could now plainly see that he was not cut out for a preacher. Very bluntly, though not unkindly, Epps agreed with him, and advised him to give up his work in the circuit at once and return to his home.

Thoroughly disheartened, the young minister, after dining, rode on to his next appointment, and there announced his intention to quit preaching. But a good old brother, with far more heart than head, urged him to try again—just one more time. After considerable persuasion he at length consented. Then the Lord helped him wonderfully. It seemed as if the words were put into his mouth to become living vehicles of beauty and power. A thrill went through his entire congregation. Never had they heard from so young a man a sermon of such force and earnestness. This wonderful success seemed to put new life

and hope into the young preacher's breast, and to inspire him to new courage and determination.

Some twenty years later, the large and influential congregation of the Light Street Church, Baltimore, were assembled to hear a preacher appointed to them that Sabbath from the General Conference then about to convene in their city. They of course expected some "big gun" that would quite take away their breath by the noise and the smoke with which it would go off. They were little less than horrified, therefore, when a man in coarse, homely garments—only a degree better than those worn by the backwoodsmen of the West—took his place in the pulpit. His air, too, was awkward and embarrassed; neither would he look them in the face, but kept his eyes resolutely fixed upon the floor in front of him. More than one person present thought to himself: "I wonder what awkward backwoodsman they have put in the pulpit this morning to disgrace us with his mawkish and uncouth phraseology." Nor did he improve as he went on. In his prayer he faltered repeatedly, "clipping some of the words at the end, and occasionally hanging upon a syllable as if it were difficult to pronounce the word." His opening remarks were in keeping with his prayer—faltering and disjointed. This, added to a most defective elocution, caused his hearers to settle themselves to listen with what politeness and patience they could command.

His text was: "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead? is

there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" His sermon was upon the spiritual disease of the Jewish Church, which had continued on from that day to the present in the human family; and of the blessed effects upon the sin-sick soul of that "balm" which God himself had prepared.

Suddenly the attention of the congregation was attracted by some wonderful change that had taken place in the preacher's voice, in his manner—in short, in the whole man himself. His face was in a glow, his eyes seemed to flame with a hidden fire, his voice swept from heart to heart, thrilling them with emotions indescribable. Astonishment now took the place of cool indifference; then followed a rapt attention, and last of all a breathless silence in which every ear seemed to hang upon his words. It was no longer a rude backwoodsman, an awkward, bashful rustic who stood before them, but the mighty, eloquent, convincing preacher—such a preacher as was not heard every day, certainly but once or twice in a life-time. The words continued to pour from his lips as a mighty flame of eloquence and truth. He seemed to sweep all before him. His hearers were no longer conscious of action or of will, but were borne along by the rushing, sweeping power of a force they could not resist. Some cried aloud for mercy; others sobbed out their penitence in scalding tears; still others fell to the floor powerless to move or speak. One preacher who was present—a tall, athletic man—dropped upon his seat as if pierced by a bullet. An-

other swayed to and fro under uncontrollable emotions.

As the preacher came down from the pulpit, surrounded now by those ready "to magnify the grace of God in him," Bishop Asbury, who was present, was heard to remark: "That sermon will make him a bishop!" Sure enough, it did; for at that same General Conference, only three or four days later, WILLIAM MCKENDREE was elected by the largest majority that any candidate—with the single exception of Bishop Asbury—had ever received to be the fourth bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

How truly has it been said: "A noble aim puts fire into the dullest soul. It turns a peasant into an apostle, and the disciple into a martyr. It leads the soul upward

Like plants in mines, which never saw the sun;
But drawn by him they guess where he may be,
And do their best to get to him."

* * *

THE BISHOP'S BEARDLESS BOY.

ON a lovely summer night, when the marvelous preaching of John Easter, that giant in the Methodist ranks, had been the talk of a certain Virginia neighborhood for more than the proverbial "nine days," a young man, a mere youth, sat alone in a large and luxuriously furnished room of a stately house, such as belonged to the wealthy planters of those days. Around him were all the evidences of

wealth and refinement, every thing to please the eye and content the heart, yet his hands were clinched, his brow was knit, and his eyes flashed ominously. What *could* be the matter? Nothing more nor less than that his father and mother had gone to one of John Easter's meetings.

The young man's heart was all on fire against the "ranting Methodists," as he called them. Again, being a most ardent and loyal American, young Enoch—for that was the youth's name—had had his worst feelings aroused against the Methodists, whom he had heard repeatedly denounced as "an idle set of enthusiastic Tories sent over by King George to sow discord in America." That his father and mother, occupying the position they did, should have forgotten themselves so far as to go to hear one of these traitors was too much! Hot-headed youth that he was, he did not stop to think that the one in question was as much a native-born American as himself. He was a hated "Methodist," and that was enough.

By the time his father and mother returned he had worked himself into such a fever of indignation that he forgot himself and sprung forward to meet them with the bitterest reproaches. But his father's stern brow, and his sterner voice, brought him to his senses. "Sir," he said, with a look there was no mistaking, "let me *never* hear such words from your lips again!" Astonished as much by his father's look as by the nature of his reproof, the young man reflected to himself: "Surely, surely, something strange has come over my father's spirit, or he would not speak

so to me. I must go to that Methodist meeting, and find out what these Methodists are really doing." *

So, he went. He heard John Easter, the mighty and the marvelous, while sharper than a two-edged sword the word cut to his soul. He was convinced, but, haughty and stubborn youth as he was, he would not yield. In absolute terror of what he might do if longer subjected to that wonderful influence, he fled from the scene, declaring: "I will never be caught in a Methodist meeting again!"

He reached home with a tumult in his heart. All the next day it raged. That night some neighbors, dropping in, on their way to the meeting, invited him to go with them. He crustily refused. The "Go, my son!" spoken in a voice he had never yet dared disobey—that of his father—sent him forth without further resistance. He sat again under that mighty rush of eloquence; again the truths so forcibly spoken swept home to his heart; and again, unable to control himself, he leaped up and sped away like a frightened deer. But this time, instead of going home, he sought the seclusion of the forest. There he dropped upon his knees, all his energies spent in this fierce fight with conviction. Later he attempted to rise, but could not. He seemed chained to the spot. A voice cried: "Now or never!" A flood-tide of feeling swept over him. He felt himself sinking *down, down!* and then with a cry of full,

*Dr. Daniel Wise, in "American Methodists."

free surrender, "Come, Lord Jesus, and take that which is thine own!" he fell forward upon his face, feeling within his heart a joy unutterable. Now, indeed, he was Christ's.

He joined the hated Methodists. Soon it was known that he would preach, though his timidity was such that when first called upon to exhort in public he fell from his seat to the floor powerless from fright. But as his zeal increased his courage also grew stronger. Soon he was able to speak with such warmth and earnestness that many were convinced, simply through his own experience. Before many months he was taken on one of the circuits as an assistant to the regular preacher, Philip Cox. There he met Bishop Asbury for the first time. "Bishop," said Cox, "I have brought you a boy," as he spoke presenting the youthful and trembling candidate. "If you have any thing for him to do, you may set him to work." The good Bishop turned and looked into the young man's face with earnest, questioning eyes. He took in every point—the tall, symmetrical figure; the fair, ruddy complexion; the dark, curling hair, and thickly marked eyebrows; the deep-set blue eyes; the large but well-shaped nose; the broad, white brow—and formed his estimate accordingly. But it was not his intention to let the young man catch even an inkling of his real feelings; so, instead, he said somewhat coolly, even while stroking the young man's beautiful hair with an almost paternal fondness: "Why, he is a beardless boy, and can do nothing." These words sunk to the young man's

heart like lead. Chilled with disappointment, he thought to himself: "And so my career as a preacher is thus at an end!" But not so. In truth, it was but beginning. The Bishop's purpose had been only to test his mettle. The next day the young preacher was sent for and notified of his appointment to a circuit some three hundred miles away.

Now, indeed, arose trials that showed of what stuff the beardless boy was really made. The journey was not only a long and arduous one—it was also beset with many dangers. But not once did his faith or his courage desert him. At the end of his journey he found the most distressing state of affairs—a poverty-stricken little society, and a community that offered the fiercest kind of persecution. Day and night he struggled. The society increased; opposition was broken down; some of the hardest cases in the community were converted; and lo, the Bishop's beardless boy had a record to show! Soon he was preaching with remarkable power. His sermons began to attract unusual attention, and before many years had passed the beardless boy had become one of the foremost preachers of his Conference.

Another scene soon occurred which further showed the mettle of which he was made. When at one of the Conferences a preacher was called for to go to the fever-stricken swamps of South Carolina, and every one seemed hanging back, either from fear or indecision, then out rung the voice of the Bishop's beardless boy as he rose to face the assembly: "Here am I; send me!"

O heroic man, and pure! worthy was he in every way to wear the honors of the high office to which he was called not long afterward; for Bishop Asbury's beardless boy was none other than BISHOP ENOCH GEORGE, of the Methodist Church.

* * *

JESSE LEE AND THE GIVEN TEXT.

WHEN Methodism first made its appearance in Virginia, as elsewhere, extemporaneous preaching was something almost unheard of, and certainly something hitherto never put into practice by the ministers of the other Churches. The sermons of that day were generally, if not always, prepared beforehand, and read from the pulpit—a very dry and soulless kind of preaching; and the Methodist preachers certainly introduced a new order of things when they spoke even without notes of any description.

On one occasion a pompous clergyman of the Church of England, thinking to confound the Rev. Jesse Lee, invited him to preach in his church—upon the condition, however, that the clergyman should select the text and not permit Lee to see it, or even gain a hint of it, until after he had entered the pulpit. To this hard condition Lee consented, with the firm trust that God would direct him aright. The matter getting noised abroad, at the appointed time the house was crowded almost to suffocation, most of the people having come with no other desire than to see the Methodist parson put to rout, as the

overconfident clergyman publicly boasted he would be. Calm and collected, Lee arose in the pulpit, gave out his hymn, delivered his prayer, and made his introductory remarks. These finished, he held out his hand for the Bible, which lay upon the clergyman's knee, with the latter's thumb and finger between the leaves. As Lee held out his hand the clergyman arose with a haughty air and pointed to the chosen text, which was a part of the twenty-first verse of the twenty-second chapter of Numbers: "And Balaam rose up in the morning and saddled his ass." Lee read it over without a change of countenance, but he thought to himself: "Rather a hard text this to preach on at so short a notice." Still he was determined not to appear in the least disconcerted, and to do the best he could. With a grim smile of almost sardonic satisfaction the clergyman settled himself back in his seat, expecting to see Lee either give it up at once or make an ignoble failure. But he had calculated upon the wrong man. The scene that followed is better described in the language of another:

"Being well acquainted with the story of Balaam, Lee proceeded at once to describe his character, descanting largely on his avarice and love of the wages of unrighteousness, denouncing in severe language the baseness of the man who could use the prophetic office as a means of gain, and could endanger the very souls of the people of Israel for the sake of the wages which Balak offered. He then proceeded to describe the oppressed, enslaved, and pitiable condi-

tion of the ass. He spoke affectingly of the patience of the creature under burdens and spurs and whippings and abuse. He said the ass usually endured without complaining all the abuse heaped on him. Indeed, except the one in the history of Balaam, there had never been known an instance of an ass speaking and expostulating under ill treatment. He alluded to the saddle, and described how galling and oppressive it might become, especially under the weight of a large, fat, heavy man. At this point he cast a knowing look at the minister, who happened to be a very large and corpulent person. Having gone through with an exposition of the subject, he proceeded to the application. He said the idea might be new to them—indeed, it had never thus struck him until the text was given him—but he thought Balaam might be considered a type and representative of their minister. Balaam's ass, in many respects, reminded him of themselves—the congregation of that town; and the saddle, bound on the poor ass by cords and girths, evidently represented the minister's salary fastened on them by legal cords. Its galling and oppressive influence they had often felt, inasmuch as in some instances—so he had been informed—the last and only cow of a poor man with a large family had been taken and sold to pay the tax for the salary of the well-fed incumbent of the saddle."

After that one experience Lee was never again troubled with officious clergymen solicitous to have him preach upon selected texts.

THE ANSWERED PRAYER.

ONCE John Easter—a name that calls up some of the most remarkable scenes in pioneer Methodism—was conducting one of his wonderful open-air meetings in a beautiful grove attached to Merritt's meeting-house, in Brunswick county, Virginia. A vast concourse had assembled. Just as he was in the full sweep of his powerful exhortation, a pall-like cloud arose and began to overspread the sky. Following the trailing garments of the cloud a heavy rain was seen sweeping up toward the grove. As soon as the people noticed the advancing cloud they arose in wild confusion and began to rush toward the shelter of the church, near at hand. Before they had taken many steps Easter leaned over in the pulpit and cried in his trumpet-like voice: "Brethren, be still while I call upon God to stay the clouds until his word can be preached to perishing sinners!" There was something in the voice, as well as in the preacher's face, that staid them in the very midst of the wild rush for the church, and that held them spell-bound with their eyes fixed in a kind of fascination upon him. His power in prayer and his boundless faith in its efficacy were well known. Trembling between hope and fear, they knelt or stood just where his words had arrested them, while he fell upon his knees and poured forth a most fervent petition to God to stay the bursting of his storm-clouds upon the heads of his defenseless people, and afterward to send sweet, refreshing showers for the thirsty crops. Even while he prayed the angry clouds that had

swiftly rolled toward them, threatening every moment to break in a tempest of rain, were now seen to divide in the midst and the two parts to pass on each side of the grove in which the excited crowd was assembled, and to come together again beyond, thus leaving a space of several hundred yards perfectly dry, and upon which the sun was soon shining brightly.

Awe-struck, the people could do little more than stand and gaze in bewilderment upon the man to whom his Divine Master had sent so visible and so startling an answer to prayer. The occurrence added tenfold to his already wonderful influence, and as a consequence gave him at this meeting scores of deeply awakened penitents. But strangest of all, next morning copious showers of rain fell upon the spot left dry the day before. In every respect God had answered his faithful servant's prayer.



JOHN COLLINGSWORTH AND THE IRATE PLANTER.

ONE of the most remarkable men in the annals of Virginia Methodism was John Collingsworth. He was a man "powerful in prayer," and seemed possessed of an almost "almighty faith." During one of his first itineraries through the State, his pious soul was grievously vexed at seeing so much of the fair land taken up with tobacco. He looked upon smoking and chewing as a useless and filthy habit, and the land given to the cultivation of the demoralizing weed as a sinful waste. Arriving at his ap-

pointment, he preached one of his most fiery denunciations of sin in every shape, winding up with a fierce onslaught against all the popular vices of the day, among which he prominently placed that of the use of tobacco. The sermon finished, he got down to pray. After presenting the needs of his congregation in various ways, and asking the mercy of God upon them, he touched upon the shameful abuse of the time and means spent in the cultivation of a filthy and obnoxious plant that spread only harm in its path. Warming up with his subject, he finally besought the Lord that if nothing else would convince these planters to manifest his disapproval of this sinful source of profit by destroying the tobacco crops then in such a flourishing condition. On that very afternoon a terrific hail-storm so riddled the tender plants that throughout that section the crops were almost wholly destroyed.

The next morning one of the planters, more irate than the rest, who had heard of the preacher's prayer on the preceding day, mounted his horse and, taking with him a long-handled, ugly-looking wagon-whip, went after Mr. Collingsworth as he rode to his next appointment. Coming up with him, he passed on to the front and fiercely demanded: "Are you, sir, the Methodist preacher who prayed the Lord to destroy my crop of tobacco?" Collingsworth replied without flinching: "My name, sir, *is* Collingsworth. I preached yesterday in the neighborhood, and prayed the Lord to show his disapproval of raising tobacco." "Well, sir," returned the planter, his wrath

increasing at the preacher's display of cool indifference, "you are just the man I am after. I am ruined for this season, and have come to take my revenge out of you, sir." As he spoke he flourished the great whip about his head. Collingsworth calmly prepared to dismount from his horse, at the same time placing an unquailing eye upon the planter's face while he said: "Well, if I must be whipped for it, I suppose I must submit; but take care that before you are done I do not pray the Lord to overtake *you* with something far worse than overtook your crop." A dread apprehension sprung up in the planter's mind. He had never thought of it in this light before: "and why not?" If the Master sent a storm of hail and wind merely to destroy crops at the servant's petition, would not a much more dire calamity befall him who offered injury to the servant himself? Thoroughly frightened, he put spurs to his horse and galloped off, glad to find himself in a few moments beyond the reach of this mighty man of prayer.

* * *

THE PRAYER IN A BALL-ROOM.

ONE of the founders of Methodism in Georgia was the Rev. Hope Hull, a Marylander by birth, and one of the giants of the early itinerant ranks. Like John Easter, he was a man of prayer. He seemed in constant communion with God, never failing to call upon him in public wherever and whenever occasion offered. Some of his prayers were remarkable as to time and place, but perhaps the most remarkable of

all was that which he made in a ball-room somewhere in Georgia, the record does not say exactly where. He was on his way to one of his appointments, and stopped at night in a certain town along the way to give himself and his good horse the required rest. As he was a stranger to all, no one even suspected his calling. It was a very hospitable town, and he was soon invited by some young men, whose acquaintance he had just made, to go with them to a ball. The readiness with which he consented threw them still farther off the track. He was soon mingling with the assembled crowd, and seemingly as much interested in the festivities as any one present. In a few moments he was invited out on the floor to dance. Then what a thunder-clap startled the light-minded people of that ball-room! In obedience to the summons, he took his place upon the floor, but it was not with a gay partner at his side. Instead, it was alone in the center of the room, and with a look on his face that sent a wave of sudden uneasiness to many hearts.

"I never engage in any kind of business," said he in slow, measured tones, yet in a voice that penetrated every portion of the room, "without first asking the blessing of God upon it. So, let us pray." The next moment he was upon his knees, while such a petition ascended to the throne of the Most High for the souls of a misguided people as seemed enough to shake the very temple of sin to its foundation. All were amazed, many completely overwhelmed. Some turned to flee in terror, but fell prostrate before

reaching the door. Others, "feeling the power of God in their midst," began to entreat for mercy, then for forgiveness. Amidst all these scenes of confusion the bold preacher kept on with his prayer. At its conclusion he said: "On to-day four weeks I expect to preach at this house." Then he quietly withdrew.

At the appointed time he was there, and such a crowd filled the house as even the night of its greatest ball had not seen. Never had the people heard such words fall from human lips! Under their power many glorious out-and-out conversions occurred. From that work in the ball-room a mighty revival of religion began, spreading from one settlement of Georgia to another, and hundreds were added to the Church.

* * *

THE CONGREGATION OF ONE.

AMONG the earlier preachers in South Carolina was the Rev. J. R. Glenn, a rather eccentric character of rugged exterior, yet within as sterling as refined gold. He had a way of drawing the largest congregations of any of his colleagues, and only once was he known to fail, and then only in numbers, not as to results.

His method was to find out some hobby or error by which the community was possessed, and then give out for a certain fixed date a sermon bearing upon the subject. Once in a very superstitious community he drew an audience, the half of which could not get into the church, by having simply announced some days before that at that time and place he would "kill witches." But our little sketch has principally

to do with the time when Mr. Glenn preached to what was doubtless the smallest congregation ever recorded in Methodist history, the results of which astounded even himself.

Visiting one appointment several times, and each time finding no one there to hear him preach, Mr. Glenn at length tacked a notice on the door to the effect that four weeks from that date he would preach at that place whether there was any one to hear him or not. At the specified time he came, and finding no congregation, as before, prepared to make good his word. He took his place in the pulpit, opened the hymn-book, selected his hymn, and gave it out stanza by stanza. Singing it through, he was in the midst of the prayer that followed, when one who lived in the neighborhood of the church, an exceedingly wicked man, chanced to pass by. Hearing the voice, and not knowing exactly what it meant, he approached the door of the little log building, and seeing the preacher upon his knees went in out of curiosity as to what this extraordinary scene could mean, and dropped upon one of the seats.

On arising and noting the addition to his congregation, the preacher, much cheered, proceeded to announce his text. This was Nathan's reproof to David: "Thou art the man!" Fastening his eyes intently upon the face of his solitary listener, he proceeded thus to tell him in the most convincing language that *he was the man* whom God had been following with his love and mercy lo these many years. Startled and amazed, the man continued to listen, his very soul

seemingly drawn from him in spite of himself and hanging upon the preacher's words. At the close of the sermon, trembling in every limb, and sobbing out in his deep concern and alarm, he presented himself at the altar, where the devoted preacher knelt with him hour after hour, nor left him till he was happily converted.

At his next preaching-place Mr. Glenn's friends were anxious to know what had been the result of his visit to the appointment where he had not as yet been known to assemble a congregation. To their surprise he told them that he had had "a fine meeting," and that "*every wicked man in the house* had been converted and joined the Church."

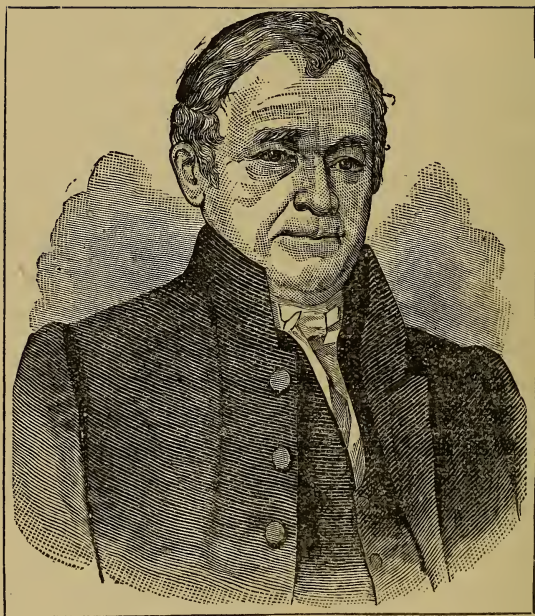
After that he did not lack for congregations at any of his appointments.



THE RAGGED ITINERANT AND HIS FAITH.

THOMAS WARE followed Jesse Lee into North Carolina. He was a bold veteran, loyal to his Master's cause, and willing to suffer any privation to promote it. He had known what peril and suffering were on the frontiers. He had forded rivers waist deep; he had walked for miles through the blinding snow; he had climbed rugged mountains; he had been in floods and cyclones; he had slept in the woods; he had bivouacked with wolves and fought with Indians.

In 1789 he came back over the Blue Ridge into North Carolina, and, attending the Conference at McKnight's Church on April 11th, was appointed to



THOMAS WARE.

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Caswell Circuit. Mounting his horse, he set out for his field of labor, poorly clad, nearly penniless, but "happy in God." Indeed, his condition was really pitiable. He hadn't a whole under-garment left; his coat was worn through at the elbows; while as to shoes and socks, he had of the former none, and of the latter only one ragged pair. The picture may seem overdrawn, but it is not. There it is, standing eloquently forth from the records, line for line. O these dauntless heroes of early itinerant Methodism! when *will* the world see their like again?

Though bare at elbows and naked at feet, Ware entered upon his journey with a stout heart, devoutly thanking God for such blessings as he had. His health was good, his appetite even better—alas for *that!*—and he had a noble horse. This animal he could have sold, bought an inferior one, a good suit of clothes, and had money in his pocket besides. But Ware would not entertain the thought for a moment. He loved his horse, loved him as a tried and trusty companion—a companion who had been with him through many a mile of toilsome way, who had partaken of his hardships and shared in his dangers. But alas! what the heart of the man could not do death did for him—parted him from his noble horse. Before many miles had been gone over the animal sickened and died, leaving his stricken and ragged master to toil on as best he could with bare and bleeding feet. But this trial was not to last long. A good brother, to whose house he finally came, loaned him a horse for four months. Ware's clothes were

now more ragged than ever. Indeed, in some places they barely shielded his form. Soon after leaving the house of this good brother he determined on going to New Berne and trying his credit for a suit of clothes. He could no longer pin or coax these tattered ones together. The rents were getting beyond even a Methodist itinerant's ingenuity. So he turned his horse's head in the direction of New Berne. He didn't know a soul in the place, but the faith was firmly fixed in his heart that the Lord would provide some way. At length on his journey Ware came to the house of a gentleman by the name of Howe. Though not himself a Methodist, Mr. Howe was quite friendly to that denomination. He had attended the Methodist meetings and heard their preachers, and his eyes no sooner rested upon Ware than he knew his calling, and became interested in him. The preacher's pitiable condition touched his heart, and he had resolved on helping him long before Ware's questions about New Berne and its merchants gave him an inkling of his contemplated mission there. But he decided on giving the help after a plan of his own. On Ware's getting ready to leave he hospitably pressed him to remain a few days longer. "No," said Ware, "I cannot. I thank you, but I must be about my Master's business." Howe stood gazing after him a few moments, then, as if taking a sudden resolution, called after him: "Do you know any one at all in New Berne?" "No," returned the preacher, "I do not." "Well, then," said Howe, "I have a store there, and I wish you

would hand this to my clerk," pulling a letter from his pocket as he spoke. Little dreaming what the letter contained, Ware took it, and rode on again. All the way to New Berne he kept thinking about that suit of clothes, and wondering how he was to get it, but never once losing his faith that God would in the end provide for it. On presenting the letter that Howe had given him to his clerk, Ware was overwhelmed with astonishment to learn that it contained an order on the store for twenty-five dollars' worth of any thing he might choose to select.

The Lord had indeed provided, and Thomas Ware's faith was but the faith of scores of these rugged and devout spirits of early Methodism.

* * *

PENETRATING THE WILDERNESS.

AT noon of a burning July day, in the year 1786, two horsemen were picking their way slowly, tortuously along one of the wildest and most rugged descents of the Alleghany Mountains. Their jaded steeds gave every evidence of a long and trying journey, while the attire of the riders was considerably the worse for the dust and wear of travel. Both men were in the prime of life—indeed, in the very noonday of youth, having but little more than attained their majority. Neither seemed to have an ounce of superfluous flesh. Evidently they had not been used to "fat living." Their faces were weather-bronzed; every tightly-drawn muscle in their bodies spoke of hardy endurance; their eyes flashed a steady

and resolute fire; in their whole bearing was that clearly defined insensibility to fear, that utter disregard of privations that bespoke the hardy soldier of the Revolution or the intrepid herald of the cross. Both had, in fact, been soldiers in the Revolutionary War. When mere youths they had entered the Continental Army, and had been in some of its most trying scenes. They knew what privations meant. They had slept upon the ground, with no covering but the broad sky above them; the howling winds had torn at their clothing; the driving sleet had cut their flesh; the chill rains had pierced them to the bone; hunger had gnawed them like a wolf. Many times they had nothing but a handful of moldy corn. The name of one of these courageous youths was James Haw, of the other Benjamin Ogden.

At a conference of the ministers of the Methodist Church in America, held in the city of Baltimore, Maryland, on the 8th of the previous May, these two young men had been selected by Bishop Asbury as pioneer heralds of the faith in the then but little known and savage regions of the far West. In short, their destination was no other than the "dark and bloody ground" of that section known as "The District of Kentucky." The good Bishop felt, as he placed his hands in benediction upon their heads, that the chances were a thousand to one that he would ever thus bless them again. They were literally taking their lives in their hands. But not a tremor shook their frames. They knew all the perils they had to face. Even at that distance the fearful recit-

als of the terrors enacted in these Western wilds had reached them. They had heard of brave men being tomahawked in the very bosom of their families, of fair womanhood and innocent childhood subjected to the most brutal tortures. The Indians were everywhere; they lay in ambush behind log and tree; they crouched in the bushes beside the highways to kill or to capture the luckless traveler. But these brave young spirits faltered not at the most harrowing of these recitals. They had been called upon to plant the standard of their great Commander in the very midst of Satan's stormiest battlements, and as soldiers steadfast and true they knew what it was to obey. They thought of the many fearless spirits who had encountered worse perils for the Master's sake; of the early apostles and martyrs; of the heralds of their own faith in stony England, in rugged Wales, in stormy Ireland; of this very Bishop who now placed his hands in tremulous blessing upon their heads. Ah, what had *he* not endured from the tempests of persecution, the impenetrable fronts of opposition, the swelling currents of toil and privation! Like eloquent pictures now stood out before them the icy currents he had breasted, the mountain wildernesses he had penetrated, the pains he had suffered, the hunger he had known, the cold he had endured. Weak and most unworthy of the name of Christian soldier were they if they hesitated to do what the weakest in the ranks had done, if they failed to follow where their leader had led.

Thus we find them on this hot July day toiling

down the rugged sides of the mountains. The sun beat fiercely upon their heads; their horses staggered from fatigue; their own limbs were cramped and sore; while the tortures of thirst and the pangs of hunger were full upon them. Most gratefully then, some moments later, did they hail the appearance of a tiny, thread-like stream of water trickling over a rocky ledge, and falling into a basin below. Here the jaded steeds were halted, and, their riders having drank, were in their turn led to the edge of the basin.

It was now well past noon, and the cravings of both man and beast for the meal that was wont to mark this period of the day were strong; but nowhere could be seen any promise of it, save in the scanty herbage at the base of the ledge, where the hungry beasts were soon cropping. Whence was to come sustenance for their less fortunate riders? At length, one of the young men, with a look that the other well understood, went toward the rather thin-looking bags thrown across his saddle, and in a few moments returned with a small handful of nuts and another of a hard, haw-like berry. Spreading them upon a rock near at hand, he uncovered his head. The other also approached, and both dropped upon their knees, while unto God ascended a heart-felt blessing for this wilderness meal.

This was not the first meal of a similar kind which they had eaten, neither was it one of daily occurrence. Occasionally they had come upon the rude cabin of a woodman, to whose humble fare they had been welcomed. Again, at rare intervals, they had crossed

the track of civilization, and enjoyed its comforts for a brief period. For many days past, however, they had left all such traces behind them, and the corn-cakes and the few scant slices of bear's meat obtained at a little cabin on the other side of the mountains the day before had been the last satisfying food they had eaten. But they ate their meal of berries and nuts with none the less relish for thinking of the tempting fare that had preceded it. They realized that even these might have been denied them, and most fervent were their thanks to God for his tender care. Nor were they any the less determined to push their way through even greater privations.

Before them still lay the untrodden wilderness, the dense forest jungles that were the home of savage beasts and of equally savage Indians. There would be no parsonage at the end to receive them, no waiting congregation, no church-edifice, nothing but the howling wilderness all about them and the fierce, prowling savages. Few and far between in this desolate waste were the homes of the white men. Indeed, outside the forts, into which the terror-stricken families had fled for protection from the Indians, there was scarcely a dozen cabins in the whole broad domain of Kentucky.

In the latter part of the summer of 1786, after enduring many and great hardships, and passing through perils innumerable in their most thrilling form, the two young ministers, Haw and Ogden, arrived at the cabin-home of Thomas Stevenson, one of the first white settlers of Kentucky. This good man

was not only one of the first immigrants to this section of the West, but he was also among the first Methodist pioneers to Kentucky. Previous to the sending of these two young ministers to the wilds of Kentucky by Bishop Asbury, several families, who had been members of the Methodist Church in Maryland and Virginia, had emigrated to the savage and inhospitable country. With them were Mr. Thomas Stevenson and wife. They had been among the first converts to Methodism on the American Continent. On coming to Kentucky they settled two and a half miles south-west of Washington, in the county of Mason. Here Haw and Ogden found them in the summer of 1786, and in their frontier home the latter offered up the first *public* prayer ever addressed to the throne of grace by a Methodist preacher in the District of Kentucky.

At this hospitable home the two young ministers remained for several days. At night they would preach to those who gathered to hear them, and by day, heedless of the perils that surrounded them, would go out among the families visiting and praying. How deeply impressive must have been one of these "meeting" scenes by night!—the broad-mouthed chimney, from which the blazing fagots sent out their ruddy light, throwing into rich outline the impassioned face of the minister and the bending forms of the worshipers. It also revealed the flash of steel or glanced downward into the yawning barrel of a gun, for almost every man there had a knife or a pistol belted at his side or a musket across his knees ready

for action. At any moment they might be attacked by their savage foes. Indeed, every song they sung, every prayer they offered up, more surely exposed them to attack from the Indians.

So, in imminent peril of their lives, men prayed leaning upon their muskets, with their eyes fastened upon the doors, or listened to the preacher with their fingers poised above the trigger. Nor were the women less alert. Their ears were constantly on the strain to catch the least alarming sound without. They sat with their children closely hugged within their arms, ready to snatch them up and flee at the first approach of danger, or to stay and die with them, shielding them to the last. Never had the gospel of the gentle Jesus of Nazareth been preached amidst more warlike surroundings; never had the divine words of love and peace fallen upon an atmosphere more thoroughly surcharged with harassing elements; but never did seed planted in the most congenial soil bear richer harvest. Ah, these sturdy, unyielding spirits of early frontier Methodism! would that we of to-day had more of their zeal, their faith, and their courage.

In all this broad waste there was no church-building. The services had to be held at the private houses—the rudest of cabins—and at the forts. Still these two young cavaliers went boldly to the work which they had come to do. Most stirring were the scenes enacted around them. On their visits to the houses and forts during the day their plan was to address a few words of “pathetic exhortation” to each individ-

ual. Then followed prayer and a soul-stirring hymn, the service ending with an exhortation so impassioned as to draw tears from the eyes of the most hardened. It is no wonder that from such efforts a "mighty revival of religion" commenced—a flame that spread like "fire in dry stubble."

We must not imagine that such wonderful results were attained through "flowery paths of ease." No; many of these souls were won through storms of opposition that raged about the devoted preachers like hot blasts from Satan's own furnace. The Indians were not the worst terrors they had to encounter. There were many fierce persecutors of these humble heralds of a new and, as they declared, "a pernicious faith." They were ready not only to abuse but to maltreat. They denounced them as "false prophets," as "wolves in sheep's clothing," as dragons ready to devour all who came within their reach. They declared that they had come hither with no other purpose than to "turn the world upside down," to array parent against child, and child against parent—in short, to stir up strife and dissension in the bosom of the happiest families.

Against this storm of prejudice and persecution less ardent souls would have gone down in despair; but, thank God, the old-time Methodist preacher was of the kind that *stuck*, that clung all the more tenaciously for being pulled against, else the glorious standard of the faith would never have been planted where to-day all the world may see, and seeing respect and honor.

From fort to fort, from cabin to cabin, sometimes breasting the overflowed streams or toiling through the almost trackless wilderness, these faithful men pressed their way, sowing here and there a handful of seed, which with God's blessing was to take unto itself precious life and grow—the most lowly and yet the most beautiful flower in all that inhospitable waste. Their whole souls were given to the work. No wonder they succeeded as they did. God never intended that any one should come to any gracious end through a half-hearted trial. It is only the whole-hearted soldier that can hope to storm successfully the enemy's battlements. Sometimes these brave men were guarded to their preaching-places by their friends bearing fire-arms, but generally they went alone, trusting in God to carry them safely through all danger. And it is a remarkable fact that during all this time not one fell by the hands of the savages, or even received a wound from them. Truly, God kept watch over his faithful ones.

There were no church-edifices, no regular congregations, as we have seen; but worse, there were no hymn-books, no Bibles—only a few these devoted men had brought with them, or a copy here and there in the possession of those Methodist families that had emigrated from Virginia and Maryland. But the good work went on notwithstanding these drawbacks. The preachers had within themselves *the moving power*. So long as that remained, there was no danger of their going back. Ah, they were “men of great piety and zeal,” and “God owned their labors.”

ADVENTURES AND ESCAPES OF THE REV. WM. BURKE.

THE REV. WM. BURKE, who was on the Green Circuit in East Tennessee with the Rev. Stephen Brooks, in 1792, had many thrilling adventures and narrow escapes that are worthy of record as showing the extreme perils by which the early Methodist preachers were surrounded.

In the fall of the year that Mr. Burke was sent to the Green Circuit the Cherokee War broke out, and he and his associates were constantly exposed to massacre. In September he went to fill an appointment at Pine Chapel, south of the French Broad River, and below the mouth of the Little Pigeon River. After he had crossed these rivers and reached the extreme point of the settlement, he found the inhabitants in a dreadful state of fear on account of the war. While he was preaching that night an alarm was sounded that the Indians were approaching the settlements. The entire congregation arose precipitately and fled to their homes. All night long they sat up expecting the attack; and although it was certain that the Indians were near, for some reason they did not fall upon the town at that time. In the morning, unaffected by the rumors flying thick and fast about him, Mr. Burke started for his next appointment on the south bank of Little River, having only a guard of two, more for the purpose of piloting him through the woods than for any protection. These guides had not gone very far when, becoming alarmed for the safety of their families at the settlement, they deserted him—and left him to pursue his

perilous journey alone. After wandering for a considerable time, aimlessly, as he thought, he finally made his way out of the woods and to the place of his appointment. Here it was impossible to get together a congregation, as the people were moving in from every direction and concentrating at a certain point so as to fortify themselves against the Indians. As the night closed round he found himself in a rude frontier house surrounded by implements of war, stern-browed men, pale-faced women, and terror-stricken children. Never had zealous herald attempted to plant the standard of his great Captain amidst stormier scenes. But the surroundings did not deter him from the mission upon which he had come. All were invited to join in the services held at the going down of the sun, and many gladly availed themselves of the opportunity. As the darkness of the night settled down, the lights were all put out, and each man sat in readiness with his gun upon his knees. Up to nine o'clock no attack had been made. At this hour one of the company went out to reconnoiter. He soon returned with the intelligence that there were plenty of Indians in the neighborhood, but they did not seem to be preparing for an attack upon the fort.

Mr. Burke now became desirous of going on to his next preaching-place, about ten miles distant. He felt that as imminent as was the peril it would be much safer for him to travel under cover of the night than to wait for the daylight; and he was determined to reach his appointment at the specified time if it

lay in human power. His friends in the fort now tried to dissuade him from so perilous a step, but he was resolute. He felt that despite Indian arrows and tomahawks he must be about his Master's business. So long as he was vouchsafed life and strength he regarded them as that Master's, to be used in his service. His greatest drawback was that he did not know the way; neither could he prevail upon any one at the fort to accompany him. On making inquiries he learned that there was only a narrow path, hardly traceable at night. Besides, there was the river to cross and a desolate island to traverse. All along the route the timber was very thick, and many Indians were concealed in this jungle. For the first part of the way he found the path with no great trouble, but as he neared the river he had to get down and grope for the timber with his hands, so as to avoid going wrong. He finally reached the river, and succeeded beyond his expectations, he tells us, in gaining the other shore at the proper point, when he proceeded on his way without meeting any further difficulty. It was two o'clock in the morning when he arrived at his destination. He went to the door of the cabin and rapped for admittance, but found it deserted. The inhabitants had fled to the nearest fort. At the rear of the house there was a marsh, and on the other side of this marsh he knew there were more cabins. At first he was deterred from hallooing for a guide across the marsh, lest he should bring the Indians upon him; but on second thought he determined to run the risk in preference to re-

maining where he was until morning. He commenced calling as loud as he could. In a few moments voices began to answer him across the marsh. They wanted to know who he was and what he wanted. They seemed suspicious of him, and would not at first leave the shelter of the houses. They afterward told him that they suspected it was a decoy on the part of the Indians, and were preparing to give him a warm reception with their fire-arms when a lady, at whose house he had preached, came out and recognized his voice. They then came out and conducted him around the marsh. He found the whole neighborhood collected on the other side, the cabins having given place to a hastily constructed fort. He kept his appointment, but amidst the same warlike surroundings that had greeted him at the other fort. Although the Indians were hourly expected to fall upon the little garrison, and the woods were known to be overrun with them, nevertheless there was no sign of them during the whole time of Mr. Burke's stay.

The day following, after having kept both of his appointments, this truly courageous man re-forded the French Broad River on his return. As he passed up the north bank, leaving his frontier appointments on the south side, he heard the melancholy news that all the inhabitants in the neighborhood of the Pine Chapel had been massacred by the Indians in one night—the very night following his departure. Farther on the intelligence again greeted him that both the temporary forts at which he had stopped had

also been attacked by the blood-thirsty savages and many of their inmates either butchered on the spot or carried into captivity. It seemed a most wonderful preservation of his life. As long as he remained at the settlement and the forts not a tomahawk was raised to slay, but as soon as he had left death and disaster followed.

Through such perilous scenes as these God again and again led his valiant soldiers in safety. Trusting in the sword of his word and the shield of his righteousness, they pressed fearlessly onward, bearing aloft the crimson standard of the cross, and "counting nothing dear," not even life itself, so "truth its onward course might speed," and men of all nations and of all creeds might have life eternal.



THE OLD TWELVE-CORNERED MEETING-HOUSE.

OF all the churches of early Methodism the old twelve-cornered meeting-house in Tennessee beat them all. The most skilled architect or geometrician who ever lived could not describe it, for it was not built after any plan or pattern known to either, but in accordance with a style which Mother Necessity forced upon the builders. It stood in a wild and desolate region known as "The Barrens," in the south-central part of Tennessee with the peaks of the Elk Ridge lying on one side and the waters of Buffalo River on part of the other. As these "Barrens" are scores of miles in extent, it is well-nigh impossible at this day to designate the exact spot where stood this

quaint, twelve-cornered meeting-house. Wild and desolate as were these "Barrens," they were not too wild or desolate for Methodism to enter. One preacher after another came, then Bishop McKendree himself. These earnest Methodists said, "We *must* have a meeting-house!" But where were they to get the timber? That in this part of the "Barrens" was so low and stunted it seemed that no house could be built of it. However, the ingenuity of these Methodists was equal to their zeal. Said they: "Well, if logs can't be found of sufficient length to build a four-square house, why, then we'll build a twelve-cornered one!" And they built it.

There it stood for many a day—rude, quaint, inimitable—doubtless the only structure of its own particular pattern in all the world. Its ragged outline of roughly-hewn logs held many a devout and earnest congregation; its angular rafters echoed many a genuine old Methodist shout; while from its quaint pulpit—hardly larger than a good-sized arm-chair, open at one side, and with a narrow strip across the side for a hand-board—two bishops had preached.



AN OLD LADY'S REMEMBRANCES.

"MY DEAR LITTLE CHILDREN: When I was young nothing delighted me more than to hear my mother tell about old times. Presuming that you have the same kind of curiosity, and as I like children dearly, and like to please them, I will give you some account of my intercourse with Bishop McKendree, when I

was a little girl and he was a young man. My father's house was for many years, and as long as he lived, a home for Methodist preachers. At one time Bishop McKendree was stationed in the town in which we lived. I do not remember how long he staid at our house, but long enough for him and myself to become intimate friends. He was remarkably fond of children. He liked very much to have his hair combed, and I would stand, perhaps an hour at a time, on my little chair, combing his beautiful black hair, which curled naturally, and twining it around my tiny fingers. It was all cut short except behind, and there it was just long enough to curl. He would almost fall asleep while I was amusing myself behind him. When I came to arrange it in front, he would take me on his knee. And when I was done a very sweet kiss would be my reward, and many thanks also. I would then take my little chair and sit close by him, and count the buttons at his knees. There were five at each knee; and he wore buckles on his shoes too. I shall never forget his appearance, for, in my opinion, he was perfectly beautiful. His eyes were bright and black, and the expression of his countenance was mild and benignant. He had a holy, happy look.

"I remember one day I had finished combing his hair, and was playing about the room, when some one observed that there was a cloud rising. A thunder-cloud was the most terrible thing in the world to me. I always nestled as closely as possible to my mother, because I thought she was so good the light-

ning would not hurt her. She mentioned to the Bishop how much I was alarmed, and how sorry she was to see a cloud on my account. I recollect that he called me to him, took me on his knees, laid my head on his breast, and soothed me with the kindest words. When the sharp lightning came, I would hide my little face in his bosom, and feel perfectly safe, because I thought nothing could harm me while near him, although I knew I was sinful—for I cannot remember the time I did not know it, or had not the fear of the Lord before my eyes.

“After the violence of the storm was over he related an anecdote. There was a lady, he said, who feared lightning very much. She had heard that it never struck little children; and whenever she saw a cloud arising, she would gather as many around her as she could. One day she had one or two on her lap, and several others about her, and felt safe. A cat and kitten were lying in the door very near together, when there came a severe flash of lightning, which killed the cat and left the kitten unhurt. It had such an effect upon her that she began from that time to seek religion, and never rested until she found it.

“I could tell you a great deal more about the impression his words made upon my heart at that time and in after years, when I grew up to maturity, but I am not writing my own history. Perhaps, if you like what I have now written, and my health will permit, I may tell you about some of the other bishops and preachers. I knew Bishop Asbury, Bishop What-

coat, and Dr. Coke, but *never loved any* as I did Bishop McKendree.

AN OLD LADY."

The above letter was originally written for the *Sunday School Visitor*, during the year 1852, and subsequently transcribed by Bishop Paine in his "Life of Bishop McKendree." The author was a Mrs. Mabry, of Petersburg, Virginia—a daughter of Mr. Grissell Davis, in whose house Mr. McKendree was ordained deacon in 1790, and where he often staid.

* * *

PUMPING A MINISTER.

ONE of the most disgraceful scenes, and most deplorable in its results, that ever took place in American Methodism was that of the "pumping" of the Rev. Mr. Dougherty in Charleston, South Carolina. The scene occurred near the Cumberland Street Church, then known as "The Old Blue Church." It was in 1800, when the preachers in charge were the Rev. George Dougherty and the Rev. John Harper.

Mr. Dougherty was a man of remarkable courage, but of very delicate physique. Though tall and slender, his body was weak and beset with tormenting ills. He had had a severe attack of the small-pox, which had not only undermined his constitution but left him with a disfigured face and but one eye. He was also of a consumptive tendency, and scarcely ever free from a cold or cough.

At that time the Abolition frenzy was at its height, and sectional strife and bitterness were running riot through political circles North and South. Especial-

ly had the hot blood of the South been aroused by various occurrences not calculated to cool it. Unfortunately for the Methodists the report had gotten abroad—in no other way than through the evil inclinations of their enemies—that they were in league with the Abolitionists. These reports were doubtless strengthened through their faith having had its origin in non-slave-holding England, and from its first two bishops in this country having come from there. In vain these zealous Methodist standard-bearers protested that they came as heralds of peace and not of strife; that they owed allegiance to no particular cause or faction, but simply to him who is the great Captain of all. They were everywhere regarded with the eye of suspicion, and each movement of theirs was jealously noted.

While these feelings were at their height, John Harper, greatly to his surprise and subsequent misfortune, received from one of the Northern connections a package containing various copies of a memorial recommending the preachers of the Southern Conferences to petition the Legislatures of the different States to issue an act for the abolishment of slavery. The moment he read this circular Mr. Harper knew it would not do. To show it would be like applying a match to a powder-magazine. So he very wisely stowed the package away out of sight, but very unwisely mentioned its reception to a second person. This second person begged as an especial favor to see the memorial. Mr. Harper at length, after many misgivings and various precautions, submitted a copy to

him. The party was so indignant and astonished at the boldness of the measure that he could not contain himself, and forthwith showed the circular to a third party. He, feeling no obligation to keep it a secret, spread it abroad, and the match was put to the powder. But as deeply aggrieved as they now felt themselves to be, it surely was no excuse for the "hot young bloods" of Charleston to wreak their vengeance upon innocent men and women.

The Methodists were now subjected to persecutions of every description, many of them often bordering upon great violence. They were frequently pelted in the streets, and various shameful epithets were heaped upon them. Their meetings were continually interrupted by showers of stones, rotten apples, fire-crackers, and the like. But by the following Sunday night their feelings seem to have culminated in the one desire to take some bold, decisive step. So, while the worshipers prayed and exhorted within, these noble (?) young scions of South Carolina's chivalry waited outside the church, determined to seize the preacher as he came out, and to treat him to such a lesson as he would not soon forget.

They succeeded in the first part of their plan, getting possession of Mr. Harper just as he came from the church, and were marching in triumph with him down Meeting street when they were met by a detachment of the city guards, who demanded an explanation of the proceedings. During the parley Mr. Harper's friends managed to extricate him and lead him in safety to a neighboring house.

This unlooked-for termination of their premeditated sport but served to fire still more the hot blood of these intrepid (?) youths. They now determined to catch "the villain," as they called him, or "some of his crowd," the next night without fail, and duck them under the pump. It made no difference to them that it was midwinter and their proposed victim might catch his death of cold. This prospect only added greater zest to the sport.

That night they seized Mr. Dougherty as he came from the church. His delicate appearance offered no plea in their chivalrous (?) eyes. His cough, most distressing in the winter-time, seemed the more to inflame their wicked hearts. They succeeded in reaching the pump with him, in thrusting him under the pump-spout, and in nearly drowning him with the flow before any of his church-members could interfere. Then a Mrs. Kingsley rushed into their midst, and tearing off her cloak pushed a portion of it into the pump-spout, thus effectually choking it.

The next thing that happened—says the Rev. F. A. Mood, in his "History of Methodism in Charleston"—was that a gentleman rushed into their midst, *sword* in hand, threatening death to any one who should again dare to touch Mr. Dougherty's person with a view to violence. But as regards this point of *the sword*, Mr. Mood has been led into error. The weapon carried by the gentleman in question was a *stout walking-cane*. In this matter the present writer doubtless has the best means of information, since the bold defender of Mr. Dougherty was her great-

grandfather on the maternal side—William Jackson, a tall, powerful man, full six feet in height. As he towered above the craven assailants of the delicate minister, the great cane raised menacingly in his hand, it was no wonder they slunk away like whipped curs. The story of this night's rescue, with its every little detail, has been faithfully preserved in the Jackson family and told from one generation to another with pardonable pride.

Mr. Dougherty never recovered from the inhuman treatment of that night. It hastened the fell disease, consumption—almost immediately thereafter laying him upon a bed of pain and sickness, from which he found a triumphant entrance into his Father's house above.

In commenting upon the occurrence, Bishop Asbury wrote: "There is one fact more connected with the history of this business, which deserves to be noticed. Of all the principal leaders in this proceeding, not one prospered afterward. Most of them died miserable deaths in a short time. One of them lived some time only to feel and acknowledge that the curse of God was upon him for this conduct to that *good man!*"

* * *

BISHOP ASBURY AND THE NEW PARSONAGE.

VERY proud and happy the congregation of old Bethel Church in Charleston, South Carolina, felt when they beheld in one corner of their vacant lot a spruce new parsonage finished out and out. But for some reason after its completion they seemed to be

in no hurry about getting it furnished and ready for the minister's occupancy. Bishop Asbury heard of it, and determined to give them a hint. This reaching of a half-way point and then letting things stand was not at all in accordance with his view of the matter. So, on his next visit to the city, passing by his usual stopping-places, the Bishop continued on until he came to the new parsonage. There he rode his horse into the yard, fastened him, and taking off the saddle-bags placed them in one of the empty rooms. He then went and sat upon the front steps. All this he had done without any one's knowing of his arrival. He had not been sitting upon the steps long, however, when a colored man whom he knew passed by. At first the negro could not believe it was the Bishop sitting so contentedly upon the steps of the vacant house; but a second glance satisfied him of the fact. He approached the Bishop and kindly informed him that no one lived there. "I know that," returned the Bishop quietly. "Where do you want to go, sir?" the negro asked politely. "Wherever it is I will show you the way." "I want to go nowhere," returned the Bishop as quietly as before. "I intend to spend the night here." Greatly mystified, the negro at length started off, but took care to inform some of the more prominent members of the Bishop's arrival, and of his determination to occupy the vacant parsonage. As much astonished as the negro had been, they hastened to the building to find the Bishop still sitting upon the steps. "Come, Bishop," said first one and then another, "come, go

home with us." "I cannot," said he with quiet determination. "This is the parsonage, and I desire to stay here." "But there is nothing in the house. You *cannot* stay here," they persisted. "I do not need *much*," was the insinuating reply. "Well," said they at length, "if you *will* stay, we must try to make you as comfortable as possible."

"So, away they went," says Mr. Mood in his charming little volume of "Charleston Methodism," "one soon bringing a bed, another a bedstead, chairs, and tables, and kitchen utensils, until they had two rooms—one in which to sleep and another in which to receive visitors—with the kitchen, comfortably furnished." Soon it was so thoroughly fitted up that the preachers were enabled to move in and take permanent possession.

It might be well if at the present day there were more Bishop Asburys to take up their abode on the steps of unfurnished parsonages, and thus give a gentle but effective hint.



RELIGION IN SPITE OF SUSPENDERS.

ONE of the most striking characters in Georgia pioneer Methodism was William Redwine. He was totally without culture, almost unlettered, but inimitable in his way. He had been brought up in the backwoods, and was as ignorant of the ways of polite society as an inhabitant of Fiji. He always put his presiding elder to the blush by some gross blunder which his ignorance led him to make whenever

he was put forward to exhort. But his heart was all pure gold at bottom, notwithstanding the ruggedness by which it was incased, while his great earnestness covered many defects. "He was one of those undrilled, unpolished soldiers of Christ," says the Rev. George G. Smith in his "Georgia Methodism," "who knew better how to fight in the field to which he was called than if he had been trained in the best schools of theology." How many of those rugged old pioneer itinerants of Methodism were like him!

Redwine was dead-set against all modern innovations, and in the pulpit or out never failed to charge full tilt upon them. "Once," relates Mr. Smith, "he went to the house of Brother Williamson, in Hancock county. Brother Williamson was well-to-do, and had his house somewhat elegantly furnished for those times. Brother Redwine noticed that Brother Williamson's children called him Pa instead of Daddy or Pappy, that the plates were upside-down on the table, and *that Brother Williamson wore suspenders*. He was distressed at these signs of worldliness, and went into the woods to pray. Here he fell asleep. The sun was setting. Brother Williamson had come to the same retreat for his evening devotion, and his cup overflowed that evening, and he began to shout. This awoke Brother Redwine, and looking up, he saw his happy brother. Rushing to him, he cried: 'Pa or no Pa, plates or no plates, galluses to your elbows or not, you've got religion, my brother!'" And from that day on, all the suspenders in the world, strapped in fantastic lines across Brother Williamson's back—if

such a thing had been possible—could not have made Brother Redwine for a moment doubt the genuineness of his religion. He had *seen* and *heard*, and that was enough.

* * *

TWO BISHOPS TRAVELING IN STYLE.

SOON after the adjournment of the General Conference which met in Baltimore on May 6, 1808, Bishop Asbury started out to attend some of the Southern and Western Conferences, as well as to preach by the way. It was a rough and toilsome journey, for a part of it lay directly across the Alleghany Mountains. Physically the Bishop was wholly unfit for this trip, since his old enemy, the inflammatory rheumatism, had deprived him of the use of his feet. But, after all, he traveled hundreds of miles on horseback, and preached either sitting down or standing up with the aid of his crutches. Sick and infirm as he was, the “driving-fires” within his soul never slumbered.

From Pennsylvania, where he had been preaching to the Germans—assisted by the Rev. Henry Boehm, who acted as interpreter—he crossed over into Kentucky, where Bishop McKendree joined him. The two now entered upon an arduous round, preaching, marrying, administering the sacrament, and visiting the Conferences. It will doubtless interest the reader to learn something of the style in which two bishops of the early Methodist Church did their traveling.

They started out in “a poor thirty-dollar chaise,”

with "purses to match," as Asbury himself humorously put it. Under this vehicle they carried an ax, for often they had to stop while the younger of the two cut trees out of the way, and the elder, feeble and crippled as he was, helped to clear the path. Such bishops! But they had no dainty hands to roughen nor fine clothes to soil—no ruffles to tear, no lawn to rumple, no powdered hair to disorder, nor silver buckles to tarnish.

Frequently they had to sleep in the woods, for the lack of that within their purses to pay for entertainment at the inns. Many a night they lay with nothing between them and the ground but the saddlebags under their heads. When they could get a bed of leaves or a pallet of raw deer-hide, what a luxury it was! Some new danger constantly menaced them—at one time it was in the form of a bivouac with wolves, at another a close escape from Indians. Once they were near drowning by missing a ford. Again a hurricane blew directly across their path, but God wonderfully preserved them. Annoyances, too, beset them—they lost their way in the woods, they were stung by ants, bitten by fleas, tormented by gnats, and harassed by mosquitoes.

Sometimes the coarse fare of the district was enough to satisfy their hunger—at other times it was insufficient. Often when they wanted a dinner they had not only to stop and cook it, but to hunt it as well. But this was small discomfort in comparison to trying to cook another meal by the fire that would not blaze, or when it did blaze to be at once put out

by the rain. And what a "feast-day" it was when they could dine "on raccoon and bear steaks!" O such bishops! Not once amidst all these hardships did "a cloud arise to darken their skies, or to hide for a moment their Lord from their eyes."

Contented with their lot? Beyond question they were, and often happy—yes, actually *happy* over it. Even that old shaky, wheezy, thirty-dollar chaise was the source of great happiness and satisfaction. And why? Because ever and anon they saw "men, women, and children, almost naked, paddling up the rocky hills, while even the best-off were two or three on the same horse." What a luxurious vehicle, then, seemed that creaky old chaise!

As poor accommodations as the woods frequently offered there were poorer ones at the cabins, where there was but one room, one fire-place, and from half a dozen to one dozen inmates. "Here," says the patient Asbury, "we had to preach, read, write, pray, sing, talk, eat, drink, and sleep." Sometimes these cabins were very oddly fitted up and ornamented inside and out with wild-cat skins, deer's horns, turkey wings, and the like. But wherever they came upon the inmates of these cabins, with few exceptions, our bishops were given a hospitable welcome. Where the surroundings were clean and tidy the numerous discomforts were cheerfully borne; but where they were disgustingly filthy, as well as infested with vermin, as was too often the case, then indeed the real trials of the poor bishops began, for both men were fastidiously neat in person and habits. They had a

high sense of delicacy as well of the proper return to make for honest and hearty hospitality, and they would far rather have been bitten all over by the tormenting vermin—even poor Bishop Asbury, who had unfortunately “as thin and fair a skin as ever came from England”—than to have hurt the feelings of their hospitable entertainers for a moment by complaining of their accommodations. O royal-hearted bishops!

How many miles that dilapidated old chaise passed over on this trip; how many times that patient old horse—representing fully two-thirds of Bishop Asbury’s earthly property—took his place morning after morning between the shafts; how many times at evening the two bishops came to those little crowded, skin-adorned cabins, seeking rest, or, in lieu of the cabin, lying in the woods—we may not know. But we do know that never before had bishops traveled like these two, and never have they since—at least not since the days of Capers and Bascom. Now our favored heads of the Church go whirling over the country in luxuriously furnished steam-cars, the common schedule of which is from thirty to forty miles an hour; and instead of the threadbare homespun garments and rough cow-hide shoes of the pioneer episcopacy, lo, broadcloth and patent-leathers! But times change, and people and things change with them; and surely a man is none the less zealous or devout, no farther from being a Christian, because he wears broadcloth.

THE END.

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